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[LADY FITZSLATER EXULTANT.]

SHE SHINES ME DOWN.

(BY ANNIE THOMAS.)

CHAPTER XIX.

A lie which is half a truth is ever the blackest of lies.
That a lie which is all a lie may be met and fought outright;
But a lie which is part a truth is a harder matter to fight.

It is fair dawn; the Lady Fitzslater's dressing-room in that dower house of hers which she inhabits during the few weeks of the year in which the sun is powerful enough to drive away the damp under whose influence it is being rapidly demolished—in this aforesaid dressing-room "dawn" is a monster of hideous mien.

Of "mien" infinitely more hideous than vice indeed; the latter, Lady Fitzslater can face and fence with. But "dawn," clear, cold, pitiless "dawn," with its cruel penetrative power of fetching out everybody's false high lights.

No wonder that Lady Fitzslater hates it, and shrinks from it, and huddles as much of herself as is here in the morning away into the fattest and most obscure depths of her low lounging chair.

"Draw the blind lower, and give me the morning papers," she says, snappishly, and the maid proceeds to draw the blind, and obsequious Miss Classon gives the morning papers to her patroness with that air of mingled ardour and

deference which renders her such a model companion in the eyes of Lady Fitzslater and her daughter.

Lady Fitz has a way of mopping and mowing, of mumbling and champing over the columns of a newspaper, that is rather harassing to the nerves of those present.

Her ladyship has a habit also of recalling her own attention to the matter she is endeavouring to pursue by giving vent at intervals to interjections that partake of the character both of snort and grunt.

To all these little peculiarities Miss Classon is so well accustomed that she listens to them ordinarily without wincing.

But, on this occasion there comes an "umph" of such mingled ferocity and glee from Lady Fitz's wizened lips that the faithful friend, startled out of all sense of expediency for a moment, gives a genuine jump, and exclaims:

"Is there anything very pleasant in the paper this morning, dear Lady Fitzslater?"

"Nothing pleasant; no, no, quite the reverse of pleasant," Lady Fitz answers, her eyes glistening with pleasure, and her voice trembling with impatience to tell the good tidings; "something so unpleasant that I am sure it can never have happened to one of our county families before. Read it."

Then she points a shaky finger at a certain paragraph, and Miss Classon reads in her most fulsomely toned down, but rather nasal accents, a few lines to the effect that, by command of the Lord Chamberlain, Mrs. Saltoun's presentation was cancelled, the lady having being presented by mistake.

The two women bob their heads together in eager endeavour to read over and over again the

paragraph which is so delightfully damatory to Mrs. Saltoun.

They gloat over it, and speculate about the cause of it, and after accusing Gladys of every crime in the calendar, are instantly compelled to confess that they "can't even conjecture what it may all mean."

Presently Georgina comes in, looking cross and thick-skinned, as the dear girl is apt to look in the morning, especially when duty calls her to her beloved mother's over-heated, over-perfumed dressing-room.

But a slight tinge of colour comes to the young lady's face, and a sweet expression of satisfaction succeeds the one of normal glumness, when she is told the painful and astounding news by Miss Classon.

It is soothing to her to hear that the woman who is promoted to that position which she has pined to fill at Friars Court should have had such a social fall given her.

There is only one drawback to the felicity Georgina feels, and that is rather a serious one.

"The worst of it is the disgrace won't unmarry them," she says, petulantly.

And the faithful Classon is ready at once with words of comfort.

"But, dear Georgie, it will make him hate her, probably, and that will be some satisfaction to the true friends who have grieved so over his infatuation."

"I'm sure it's not that I ever wanted him myself, that I'm glad he has found her out," Georgina says, waxing animated, and utterly ignoring the fact of which she is well aware her two companions are thoroughly cognisant—namely, that she has assiduously, glaringly, unceasingly,

and indelicately hunted Arch Saltoun for any number of years, in the hope of driving him into becoming her husband.

"We must all be glad that he has found her out. It's terrible to see a good man deceived," Miss Classon says, piously.

"I don't know about his being a good man," Georgina replies, as her eyes linger over the sentence which records Mrs. Saltoun's fate, with an affectionate solicitude that the kindest words ever penned by one human being of another would fail to call forth from her—"I don't know about his being a 'good man,' and I'm sure he's proved himself to be a very weak man. I never thought him a bit clever, and always wondered what other girls saw in him to make them run after him as they did."

"Something will come of this to enable him to divorce her, and then there's no saying what may happen," Lady Fitzlatter cuts in, pursuing her own train of thought.

"He will have had his lesson, and will try to marry a lady the next time, let us hope," Miss Classon replies.

"I saw that she was not that from the first," Georgina says, decidedly.

"Oh, of course, dear, that was very evident to us," Miss Classon replies, "but then we know what good society is. Now the people about here have taken her entirely at her own valuation, because they have no proper standards; isn't it so, dear Lady Fitz?"

Lady Fitzlatter has not heard a word of this; but she nods a prompt assent, for she feels assured that it is something derogatory to and ill-natured about someone she hates.

"Lady Ellersdale will feel very uncomfortable," Georgina says, with an agreeable giggle. "I'll have the pony put in and drive over to the Willoughbys, and you'll come with me if mamma can spare you."

"Yes, dear," Miss Classon says, rising at once, and bending down to pour Georgina's request into Lady Fitzlatter's rapidly dulling ear. Early as it is in the day, her ladyship feels the necessity of indulging in a renovating dose, in order to recover from the fatigue consequent on the strain there has been on her most powerful emotions this day. So in a short time the fiery cross proclaiming that there is to be war in the land against Mrs. Saltoun is being whirled along in the persons of these two ladies, in Georgina's pony carriage.

Hesselton takes the news in many ways, but on the whole the majority receive it in a manner that repays Miss Finlay for her trouble. The Letchfords instantly remind themselves and each other of several duplicates of Mrs. Saltoun whom they have known and "suspected from the first" in the many seaport towns which have, at different times, been honoured with their presence.

Indeed, to Miss Finlay's annoyance, they hint that her news is no news to them, for that from information received from a very sound source, they knew that the doom was hanging over Mrs. Saltoun all along.

"If she had been 'umber in her manner, and shown anything like a spirit of gratitude for being noticed at all, I would have given her a hint, and have spared her this death-blow."

"And I'm sure that any woman of right feeling would only have been too glad to take advice from you, dear Mrs. Letchford," Miss Classon purrs through her nose. "I was saying to Lady Fitzlatter only yesterday, that you seemed to know everything and everybody."

Miss Classon comes to a halt abruptly, checked by a dissenting glance from Mrs. Letchford. The latter lady, with all her faults of birth and breeding, and habit, is not a fool.

She strips the fulsome flattery from Miss Classon's speech, and lays bare its real meaning to herself.

Miss Classon has been ridiculing her as a gossip and a scandalous busybody to Lady Fitzlatter.

Well, so be it, but the day will come when Miss Classon shall repent herself of this perfidy, and when Lady Fitzlatter and Miss Finlay shall have the scales torn from their eyes, and be made to see the trusted companion as she is.

"She's playing a double game between mother and daughter, and her cunning will outwit itself," Mrs. Letchford says; to herself, incisively.

"Yes, I do know a great deal about a good many people," she says, fixing her eyes like a poignard points upon Miss Classon's face. I see a good deal more than people want to show me of themselves very often, Miss Classon. I can't help it, I've a good eye for deceit."

"And you saw that in Mrs. Saltoun, I'm sure," Miss Classon says, striving to speak out straight and not to smirk and be sycophantish, as it is her nature and habit to be.

"I see it in a good many people more than in Mrs. Saltoun," Mrs. Letchford snaps out.

"One would think that Miss Classon had wanted to marry Arch Saltoun herself to hear the way she gloats over Mrs. Saltoun's downfall, wouldn't one?" Miss Finlay says, pleasantly, with the air of thinking that there is something too utterly incongruous and absurd in the suggestion she has made for anyone to regard it seriously for a moment.

Miss Classon makes a note of this manner of her younger patronesses in her mind, and registers a vow that Miss Finlay shall give account one day for these idle words at least.

"It is always difficult for anyone of us to say what another person's hopes and ambitions really are," Mrs. Letchford says, sententiously, "and we're all creatures of habit; Miss Finlay—all creatures of habit; if we have to make our way in the world by being a little independent, and showing that we are not going to be trampled down—well, we are independent, and we do show that we won't be trampled down; but if on the other hand we get our daily bread by fawning, and flattering, and low treachery, well, I suppose we should all descend to these things in time."

"Mamma has almost fixed for her garden party," Georgina Finlay says, in reply to this, "and we hope you'll all come."

"Yes, we hope you'll all come," Miss Classon adds, and Mrs. Letchford's soul frizzles within her at the audacity with which Miss Classon places herself on the highest level attainable at the moment.

"For Miss Classon, who came to teach A.B.C. and pot-hooks to Miss Finlay, to dare to act in judgment on Mrs. Saltoun, even, it's a little too much," Mrs. Letchford says, indignantly to herself. "Lady Fitzlatter and her daughter are a couple of idiots for letting her come in and divide them as she is doing. She'll bamboozle the old woman into leaving her money, and defraud the young one of her rights in the end, and serve Miss Finlay right too for being so easily deceived and cajoled."

"Those Letchfords are a terrible set of toadies, I'm sure," Miss Classon says, with an air of mournful regret, as soon as they are clear of the house. "I understand they were all ready to fall down and worship Mrs. Saltoun the other day when they thought she was going to reign here; and now they're quite as ready to turn up their noses at her as her worst enemy can be."

"Mrs. Letchford can say amusing and sharp things, can't she?" Georgina Finlay (who has not failed to take in the full meaning of the speech Mrs. Letchford has made relative to people getting their daily bread by fawning, and flattery, and low treachery) says, with a laugh.

"Ah! it's easy to say sharp things if one throws all consideration for courtesy over," Miss Classon rejoins, colouring up vividly; "you see Mrs. Letchford hasn't the feelings of a lady to restrain her sharp utterances. I believe it's quite true that her father was only a naval tailor, and that Captain Letchford only married her to settle his bill."

"Oh, do they say that?" Georgina (who loves a soupçon of scandalous gossip no matter about whom it may be) says, eagerly.

"Yes, indeed they do," Miss Classon replies, in her most insinuating drawl, "and I do think that dear Lady Fitzlatter ought to know it, for a tailor's daughter and granddaughter are not quite fit companions for Miss Finlay."

Georgina relies greatly upon Miss Classon, and could not get along at all well without her down here in the depths of the country. At the same time she never misses an opportunity of throwing any stray pebble that may be conveniently near at hand at her servile but useful companion.

"And Mrs. Saltoun told mamma that you were the daughter of her Dublin china and glass shop-man," she says, suavely, "so you see Mrs. Letchford isn't the only one who is accused of coming of no particular family; not that I think it matters at all for you, you know, or for the Letchfords; they would never have been in good society—in our society—quite even if Mrs. Letchford's father had been by way of being a gentleman."

A gleam—not a flash—comes from Miss Classon's eyes at this, but she has schooled her tongue to silence, until she is alone with Lady Fitzlatter, when one or two little domestic points on which the mother and daughter differ are deftly sharpened by the skilful companion.

CHAPTER XX.

Friendship! 'Tis but two in one:
Let the canting liar pack!
Well I know when I am gone
How she mouths behind my back.

MRS. SALTOUN has enveloped herself in an impenetrable mantle of silence on the subject of the public slight that has been proffered her in a way she has been unable to decline.

"Silky silence," is what Mrs. Dumorest terms it; but then Mrs. Dumorest's ears have been itching to hear about everything; and everything has not been told to her.

Gladys, in short, has proved herself a great proficient in the grand art of holding one's tongue.

Her sister-in-law has been indignant, hysterical, sympathetic; everything in turn, but nothing long, and Gladys has been receptive and quiescent.

Magnificently quiescent, on the whole; only this is a quality of which the common herd has no appreciation. Feeling this, she makes too large a point of gaining it, and comes back to Hesselton in a week or two grande dame, a little indisposed, but grande dame still.

But what is the use of her attempting to play a reputable and honourable part before the public, when at home she is ground down by the knowledge that Arch, her husband, has a distrust of her, which though he keeps it secret, is not the less potent in wrecking her home peace.

She cannot define exactly the change which has taken place; she dare not do it, perhaps, poor woman—but, the change has come.

Arch is the tender, trusting, loyal lover no longer; he has become the anxious, critical, rather exacting husband.

Yet "exacting," after all, is hardly the word to apply to a man who is evidently so miserable in his own mind, and so nervously doubtful of whether everything he does is for the best or not.

There has been no further word said between the husband and wife relative to that poisonous social stab which she has received.

It has been Gladys's desire that silence shall reign on the subject, her unspoken but still not decided decree.

To tell the truth, after two or three days have passed over his head, Arch has felt rather relieved by this than otherwise.

He has a man's manly and sensible horror of talking about wrongs that cannot be righted, and of doubling shadowy fiats at imaginary or intangible foes in a futile way.

Gladys has decreed that inquiry shall not be pushed further, and though at first he had been ready to go out and do doughty deeds, discretion tells him now that perhaps Gladys is right in ordaining that this policy of masterly inactivity shall obtain.

The one attempt which Lady Ellersdale made, while Gladys was still in town, to pour oil into the wound may certainly be described as a dead

failure in execution, though most admirable in intention.

Lady Ellerdale had gone to her friend early in the morning, at about eleven o'clock, and already Mrs. Saltoun had been "out for an hour riding," she heard to her surprise.

"I was disappointed at not seeing her, and astonished at hearing that she had gone to the Row," Lady Ellerdale said, when her husband casually questioned her about her visit to Mrs. Saltoun, and Lord Ellerdale did not think it necessary to say that the lady had evaded the Row, as if a pestilence were reigning there, and had gone down for a mind-diverting gallop in Richmond Park.

But now after a week or two of dreary, self-contained, unrelieved sadness and dullness down at Friars Court, there is a promise of something better for Gladys Saltoun.

She has encased herself in reserve, and withdrawn herself from that free and familiar intercourse with Arch which had made his home such a paradise to him before that fatal trip to town.

But the reserve breaks down, and there is a touch of the old happy, free, loving intercourse in the way in which she greets him one morning, when he comes in from a long, solitary ride over his land.

"Arch!" she cries out, running out from a side door from the morning room, and arresting him on his rather moody way to the stables, "do say you're glad for me; the Ellerdales come down to-night, and Geraldine Gascoigne is coming to me to-morrow."

He cannot help being "glad for her," and for himself, for as she tells him her news she beams forth the same bright, beautiful, sparkling woman who, by means of that same brightness and beauty, and habit of sparkling, won him so entirely at Torquay.

He despises himself for having allowed wounded feelings on either side to erect such a barrier of constraint as has been between them for the last fortnight, and as the groom leads the horse on, he turns to the side walk, and meets Gladys with something like the ardour, admiration, and affection to which he accustomed her at first.

"I am glad for you, my darling," he says, heartily, "especially about the Ellerdales; you can't have a better friend than that dear, good woman."

"I am especially glad about Geraldine," she says, with a touch of her contrary spirit, "she is so amusing, so sympathetic, and so full of the power of getting the best out of life that life can offer, that I do delight in being with her."

"Lady Ellerdale is very quiet and undemonstrative, I know that, but I can't help feeling that she is a better friend for you than Miss Gascoigne, though, of course, Miss Gascoigne will be a delightful companion," he adds, hurriedly, as he sees a storm gathering on Gladys' brow, and in her rather too expressive eyes.

"All I ask of people is that they shall amuse me," she says, bitterly. "I don't want them to praise me, or advise me, or take me into their social custody in any way; all I ask of them is that they will amuse me, so long as it suits us both. I have learnt that if I asked more I should never get it."

"I don't like you to speak in a cynical, bitter way, even if the cynicism and bitterness are put on," he says, deprecatingly. "With all my heart I like people who amuse you, but at the same time believe the truth, and that is that there is a great deal of human kindness about in the world; never distrust that."

"I haven't experienced very much of it," she says, carelessly; "and I have learnt to do without it very contentedly, and to be quite satisfied with the people who amuse me for the time being, for purposes of their own, and with my dog who loves me disinterestedly."

"If we ever have a child how you'll love it!" he says, warmly. "You care for that dog more tenderly than half the women do for their children."

He pauses expecting a response from her, and she makes none, so with a slight shadow over his spirit he reverts to the original topic.

"We must do all we can to amuse Miss Gascoigne; it's lucky the Ellerdales are coming just now, for they always have their house full from the time they come back from town till late in the autumn; does she care for riding?"

"She cares for doing everything that she looks well in doing," Gladys laughs; "if her figure looks well on horseback she likes riding I am sure, but I never heard her say anything about it."

"And there'll be the Dalesmeet ball, and a lot of dinners going on, and otter-hunting," Arch says, hopefully, with the air of one who is firmly convinced that in this last-named sport and pastime is to be found a true panacea for all minor woes that may afflict mankind during the warm weather months.

"If she looks well wading through a river or jumping the same with a pole she'll delight in otter-hunting," Gladys says; "if she finds either feat unbecoming, she'll content herself with driving to the scene of action in my victoria, and will gracefully despise and look down upon every man who prefers pursuing the sport to talking to her."

"You don't think much of your friend, Gladys, if you believe her to be such a mass of vanity and conceit."

"I don't think much of people generally whether they're full of vanity and conceit, or quite devoid of those qualities. Geraldine fulfils every condition that I require of her; she is charming, she is pretty, she is quite clever enough to please me, and she amuses me, and never bores me with curiosity or inquisitiveness about what doesn't concern her."

"That's a mere butterfly friendship, after all, he says, seriously.

And he looks regretfully at this fair, unsatisfying wife of his, wondering how she who is so capable of inspiring something so much higher and deeper should be contented with a mere ephemeral, worthless, fragile sentiment such as this which so lightly binds her to Miss Gascoigne.

He ceases to wonder at the fascination the two women exercise over one another when he sees them together.

They supplement each other well. Gladys' quiet, well-bred repose, the delicate gradations by which she changes from grave to gay, from lively to severe, are sweeter than ever when viewed in contrast with the more striking lights and shades in which Miss Gascoigne's manner is "put in."

The actress is brilliant, attractive, "well-marked" wherever she is, and not "vulgar" because she is an actress off the boards as well as on them.

But there is something that instinctively makes people who have come of stocks that have been running in well-regulated grooves for several generations ask, "Who is she?" and where she comes from.

The answer to the first question can be given promptly and proudly: "She is Miss Gascoigne, the celebrated actress."

As to where she comes from it is too foolish to ask such a question while she keeps her youth and beauty, and that dramatic power which enables her to warm to enthusiasm even the cold hearts of an English house.

They are a splendid pair of women, indeed, as Arch Saltoun sees with satisfaction as they face him in the carriage that is conveying them over to that garden-party at Lady Fitzslater's which the weather has at last settled itself sufficiently to enable her discreet ladyship to give.

Something else has settled itself, too, and that is her resolution as to the line of conduct which she shall adopt towards Mrs. Saltoun.

"While the Countess of Ellerdale calls her 'her friend' I will stand by Mrs. Saltoun as one woman should stand by another," her astute old ladyship says, magnanimously.

Accordingly, Mr. and Mrs. Saltoun and any friends they may have with them receive invitations that have caused Miss Clason to chew the bitter cud in writing to Lady Fitzslater's garden-party.

"Quite an unpretentious little affair. Just one of my usual little pleasant parties," Lady

Fitz says, after she has welcomed Mrs. Saltoun and Mrs. Saltoun's peculiarly striking friend. "You'll find many people whom you know and many more who are most anxious to know you. Ah! and here's dear Lady Ellerdale, actually taken the trouble to come all this way in this dreadful heat to my humble little gathering."

"What a beast of a woman! As if we hadn't come further, and didn't feel the heat quite as much as dear Lady Ellerdale," Miss Gascoigne remarks to her chaperone, and Miss Clason, sitting near, pouring out tea as if she had imported it herself when Lady Fitz is not hard by, hears her.

Gladys smiles and shakes her head, but, honestly, there is no very strong proof conveyed in that movement.

Mrs. Saltoun does not quite approve of the manner of the speech, but she goes heart and soul with Miss Gascoigne as to the matter of it.

To do Gladys Saltoun simple justice, it must be said that she is not a snob, and now it is only because her own ears are offended by the words used that she makes the gesture of disapproval, and not at all because she is perfectly sure that the watchful ears of her enemy are open to catch them.

"I never make marginal notes and queries when I'm reading a few pages out of society's books, myself," she says, so quietly and gracefully, that Miss Clason feels as if she could beat her for uttering anything so irreproachable. "Come with me, and I'll introduce you to Lady Ellerdale."

"Who is the handsome man with her?" Miss Gascoigne interrupts.

"Her husband."

"Indeed! What a well-matched pair," Miss Gascoigne says, throwing up her handsome head in a way that London theatre-goers, and a hundred photographers who have vainly sought to catch the pose, know well.

Then the two ladies sweep across the lawn, their dresses following them properly without any indiscreet wriggings or exposures of linings that were never meant for exhibition; and the brilliant, glittering star of the drama is presented to the quiet, gentle-spirited county lady, who has not even heard enough about actresses to have an aversion to or distrust of them.

There is not much in the way of entertainment to keep people together at Lady Fitzslater's.

The drawing-room window is open, and "a little music" makes its way out into the garden.

In one part of the lawn the Miss Letchfords and a few of their friends are playing lawn-tennis, turning themselves into the semblance of "enterprising kangaroos," Miss Gascoigne remarks.

In another corner Miss Clason dispenses tea, and the blandest words she has in her repertoire against everyone who is absent, and in favour of everyone who is present.

Further apart from this giddy throng, a little circumscribed path winds its way among a few stunted laurels, and here Mrs. Saltoun and Lord Ellerdale are walking.

"Your friend is a superbly lovely woman. I've often admired her on the boards, but, by Jove! I never knew what a beauty she was till you flashed her upon me just now," he says, enthusiastically.

"I am glad that you admire—my friend," she replies, looking at him with eyes that, for some reason or other, are very sad.

(To be Continued.)

SCIENCE.

HOW FAST CAN YOU THINK?

"Quick as thought," and "Quick as lightning," are commonly used as synonymous expressions. But their difference is really great. An electric impulse traverses a wire as a wave of motion; a nervous impulse proceeds by a development of chemical change in the nerve. It runs along the nerve somewhat as combustion

follows a train of gunpowder, and not much, if more rapidly.

Indeed Helmholtz has clearly determined the rate of nervous propagation to be less than a hundred feet a second, or about a mile a minute.

Even along courses as short as the nerves of the human body, an appreciable time is required for the passage of nervous impulses.

With a simple apparatus, Hirsch found that a touch upon the face could be recognised and responded to by a predetermined signal operated by the hand, in one seventh of a second. With a sound test, acting, of course, upon the ear, the answering signal was made in one-sixth of a second; when the eye was addressed, the response came in one-fifth of a second. Since the distances travelled by the nervous impulses were very nearly the same in all these experiments, it is evident that the greater part of the difference of time noted must be charged to the greater or smaller rapidity of the act of recognition, the entire process in each case being the transmission of a sensation (touch, hearing, or sight) to the brain, its recognition, the willing of the signal agreed upon, the transmission of the order to the muscles of the hand, and the movement of those muscles. Thus it would appear that less time is required for recognising a touch than a sound, less time to hear than to see.

But what part of the fifth, sixth, or seventh of a second, as the case might be, was consumed in the act of recognition?

Donders was successful in answering this question by the use of several forms of apparatus, involving entirely different methods, yet yielding the same results. He found, for instance, with the "noëmatachograph" that the double act of recognising a sound and willing response required seventy-five thousandths of a second. Of this time, forty thousandths of a second were required for simple recognition, thus leaving thirty-five thousandths for volition. With the "noëmatachometer" he found that the same time, forty thousandths (or one twenty-fifth) of a second, was required to judge which was first of two irritants acting on the same sense. A slightly longer time was required to judge the priority of signals acting on different senses, as a sound and a light. It also took longer to recognise a letter by seeing its form than by hearing its sound.

This in a man of middle age. Young people thought quicker, but the difference was not great. In all the experiments the time required for a simple thought was never less than a fortieth of a second. In other words the mind can perform not more than twenty-four hundred simple acts a minute, fifteen hundred a minute being the rate for persons of middle age.

From these figures it will be seen how absurd are many popular notions in regard to the fleetness of thought, how exaggerated are the terrors of remorseful memory that moralists have invented for the moment of dying. And we may reasonably "discount" also the stories told by men saved from drowning, cut down before death by hanging, or rescued from sudden and deadly peril from other causes. No doubt a man may think of a great multitude of experiences, good or bad, in a few minutes; but that the thoughts and emotions of a long life may surge through the mind during the seconds of asphyxiation are manifestly impossible.

Admit that the speed of mental action is abnormally rapid at such times, say twenty-five hundred simple cognitions a minute, or 150,000 an hour. If a man were an hour in drowning, instead of a few minutes, and all the time be given to a mental review of his life, he would, if forty years old, have time to give ten thoughts of the simplest character to each day that he had lived. In other words memory would have time to review the experiences of at most the hundredth part of one second out of each day's waking thousands.

AUSTRALIAN FISH.

Four very interesting specimens of fish have

been received at the Museum, from one of the western rivers of Queensland. They were forwarded by Mr. Whitham from a station the property of Mr. John Living, and although preserved only in salt, arrived in very good order, notwithstanding the extreme heat of the weather. These fish (*Osteoglossum Leichhardtii*) belong to the family *Osteoglossidae*, better known to the settlers as Barramundi. As far as is yet known they are only found in the waters of the Dawson River, where they attain to a length of 5 ft., and associate in small shoals of from five to twenty.

The specimens under consideration measure about 2 ft. long by 6 inches in depth, and were taken in the river about 240 miles west of Rockhampton. The scales are of unusually large size, and are regularly marked with one or two well-defined bright pink spots. The sides and belly are of a light silvery pink, the same tint being noticeable on the opercula, or gill covers, which are of a hard bony character, the back, dark brown, showing a beautiful metallic lustre while in the water. The dorsal and anal fins are placed near the tail, and the mouth opens obliquely, somewhat like that of a salmon, and is armed with several series of small teeth. The only other specimen in the Museum is one obtained many years ago by the lamented Dr. Leichhardt, and it is believed that only one specimen has ever been sent to European Museums.

THE LAND OF DREAMS.

Where the great brook willow swayed,
Tangled shine and shadow flinging
On the bright locks of the maid,
Roguish Kitty sat a-swinging—
Merrily swinging to and fro,
As the winds blew high or low.

Cradled by the gnarling arm
Of the mighty willow, lithely
Swung the airy, fairy form,
Rocked by all the breezes blithely—
Like some dainty elfin green,
Bowered among the branches green.

Just a dimpled, daisy face,
Pansy eyes, and hair as yellow
As the ripe silk of the maize,
And a laugh as clear and mellow
As the wood-notes of a bird
In some sylvan thicket heard.

Just two blue eyes, dewy sweet,
Laughing down at me, her lover,
Just a glimpse of little feet,
And a grey robe trailing over
With a breezy swish and stir—
That was all I saw of her.

Lullaby! The listless breeze
Swayed the silver curtained willow—
Lullaby! The drowsy bees
Droned about her leafy pillow,
Till the white lids, low and lower
Drooping, veiled the blue eyes o'er.

Thus my love, one sunny day,
In the meadow blithely swinging,
With the bees and breeze of May,
Joyous bird-notes round her ringing,
Soft tho' tangled glooms and gleams
Sung into the land of dreams.

E. A. B.

HOW TO TAKE CARE OF A BABY.

FIRST, a man must have one to take care of. It isn't every man, you know, that is fortunate enough to have one; and when he does, his wife is always wanting to run over to a neighbour's only five minutes, and he has to attend the baby. Sometimes she caresses him, and oftener she says, sternly:

"John, take good care of the child until I return."

You want to remonstrate, but cannot pluck up the courage, while that awful female's eye is upon you; so you prudently refrain, and merely remark:

"Don't stay long, my dear."

She is hardly out of sight before the luckless babe opens its eyes, and its mouth also, and emits a yell which causes the cat to bounce out of the door as if something had stung it. You timidly lift the cherub, and sing an operatic air; but he does not appreciate it, and only yells the louder!

You bribe him with a bit of sugar; not a bit of use, he spits it out, and tries to put his foot into your mouth. You get wrathful and shake him!

He stops a second, and you venture another; when, good heavens! he sets up such a roar, that the passers-by look up in astonishment. You feel desperate; your hair stands on end; and the perspiration oozes out of every pore, as the agonising thought comes over you, what if that luckless child should have a fit! You try baby talk; but "litty—litty lamby" has no effect; for he stretches as if a red-hot poker had been laid on his spine, and still he yells. You are afraid the neighbourhood will be alarmed, and give him your gold watch as a last resort, just in time to save your whiskers; though he throws down a handful of your cherished moustache to take the watch, and you thankfully find an easy chair to rest your aching limbs, when down comes that costly watch on the floor, and the cause of all the trouble breaks into an ear-splitting roar, and you set your teeth, and prepare to administer personal chastisement, when in rushes the happy woman known as your wife, snatches the long-suffering child from your willing arms, and sitting down, stills it by magic, while you gaze mournfully at the remains of your watch and cherished moustache, and muttering a malediction on baby-kind in general, and on the image of its father in particular, vow never to take care of a baby again—until the next time.

SELF-GOVERNMENT.

In the midst of events which seem to bespeak predestination, man still feels that he is free. The planets wheel through the heavens; the earth revolves on its axis, and performs its vast annual circuit; the seasons come and go; the clouds rise and vanish; the rain, the hail and snow descend; and in all this, man has no voice.

There is a system of government above, beyond and around him, declaring a sovereignty which takes no counsel of him. But still, in the midst of all this, man possesses a consciousness of freedom. The metaphysician may be confounded with the seeming inconsistency of an omnipotence, ruling over all things, yet granting free agency to the subjects of its power.

But commonsense does not puzzle itself with an attempt to discover the precise point at which these seeming principles of opposition may clash or coalesce. It contents itself with the obvious fact that the Lord is a sovereign, who has yet created beings, and given them their freedom, prescribing boundaries to their powers and capacities, indeed, but within these limits permitting them to act in their own volition.

Man then is free; he has the power to seek happiness in his own way. He enters upon existence, and sets forward in the path of life. But as he passes along, a thousand tempters beset him. Pleasure comes to beckon him away, offering him present flowers, and unfolding beautiful prospects in the distance. Wealth seeks to make him her votary by disclosing her magic power over men and things. Ambition woos him with dreams of glory. Indolence essays to soften and seduce him to her influence. Love, envy, malice, revenge, jealousy, and other busy spirits assail him with their various arts.

And man is free to yield to those temptations if he will; or he has the power to resist them if he will.



[EVELYN A CAPTIVE.]

THE WHISPERS OF NORMAN CHASE.

CHAPTER XII.

Was ever woman in this humour wooed?
Was ever woman in this humour won?
I'll have her! RICHARD III.

THAT which has been termed the forest might more correctly, perhaps, be described as a plantation; for it was of no great extent, though solitary and dismal enough.

The distance was half traversed, indeed, before Evelyn recovered consciousness. It was the cue of Mr. Mathew Drake not to break upon her unconsciousness too soon, until the track or road, along which the carriage sped, became altogether lonely, without a trace of human habitation anywhere visible.

But no swoon lasts very long, and in due time the young girl awoke to a knowledge of her position and her companion, who, however, sat quiescent, though he kept a steady gaze fixed upon her face.

As steadily as it returned. Presently, Evelyn said, in a cold, hard voice—for her mind was made up to the course she would pursue:

"What do you expect to gain by this outrage, Mathew Drake? Is my father safe?"

"Your second question answers your first," he replied. "Yes, he is safe, so long as the most dangerous witness can be made sure of."

The villain had, in an instant, planned a new set of tactics.

"You see, Miss Evelyn," he went on, with great respect of manner now, "you see the state of affairs. But first pardon me for a few words I uttered before coercing you into undertaking this little journey, during which you will be perfectly safe, both from me and from others."

"What others? you, I am very far from fearing."

"Listen. They were searching for your father. They are now searching for you. Upon your silence and secrecy, for a time, the lives both of your parent, and of that one else, whom you vainly love, depend. Who gave you the second locket, the locket of gold, emeralds, and pearls?"

"My father."

"Never mind his motive," continued Drake. "He believes, firmly, that you have accused him. Evelyn Hedley, what has been your language towards him? I have heard it. Yes, you have accused him, and I have heard you say the words."

"It is false!" she said. "But where am I going?"

"Where your safety will be your father's also. But why have you watched your father in the night? Why invoked his conscience? Why declared that you would henceforth live and watch for ever by his side? Above all, why discard your lover, Herbert Leaholme, who now consoles himself with the compassion of Augusta Fairleigh?"

"Her compassion! For what?"

"For his having been duped into betrothal to a girl false in name as in heart, carrying a ghastly and degrading secret in her breast, and deceiving her truest friend. There, my Evelyn"—all his assumed respectfulness had vanished now—"our ride is at an end. I hope you have found it agreeable."

Stung to desperation, she looked out from both windows of the carriage, resolved that, at any risk, she would escape from the tauntings and the power of this man.

Too late!

In her excitement she had not perceived that a broad, black ditch had been passed by means of a bridge, formerly opened and shut by chains, but long since allowed to be stationary, through a high and heavy gateway into an avenue, leading across a garden of desolate aspect, towards a building of Gothic character, green with damp, and betraying no signs of human life.

But, as the post-chaise drove up, a heavy door, at the top of a mouldering flight of steps, opened, and two stern and stalwart-looking women appeared, who assisted Evelyn to alight.

Mathew Drake preceded them into the entrance hall.

"Welcome, Evelyn," he said. "Why are you so frightened? This is neither a madhouse nor a prison, but a gentleman's residence. These persons will see to your comfort—and security. Anticipate no annoyance from me. I am going to meet your father. He is not a mile away."

"That I should ask favour from you," she answered, "is that which I should not have believed a moment ago. But tell him, if you ever hope for pardon, that his child never slandered him, except in one unhappy moment to her own heart; that she would die to save him, and will die rather than utter a syllable to do him harm."

"If his 'child' and not Evelyn—commonly called Evelyn Hedley—gave me this message," replied Mathew Drake, with an emphasis on every word, "I would gladly be the bearer of her message. As it is, I shall tell him that you only want the opportunity to proclaim his guilt in the ears of the whole world."

Without another word he was gone. Our Evelyn was brave enough, as we know, but she trembled now.

An awful sense of sickness took possession of her heart. Lonely and powerless, she felt as though an utter darkness were settling down upon her life.

No friend left, her father a fugitive, imputing to her almost the sin of parricide; him whom she had loved—loved still—estranged and disdainful; Augusta Fairleigh, whom she had taken into the sweet confidences of her girlhood, an insulting and triumphant rival, and this man denying her birthright! Where was it to end? So she asked herself, standing there, still and mute, as Mathew Drake had left her.

"What are you going to do with me?" she presently said, as one of the women took her hand, as if to lead her away.

"No harm, miss," was the answer, in a not untender tone. "We are to treat you kindly, and be obedient to your wishes. You are to do nothing and see nobody, unless at your own desire."

This, so far, was reassuring, yet it only increased the perplexities of her position.

Not that she had ever feared, for a moment, the perpetration of any actual crime. The Black Moat might be a silent and a solitary place; and Drake might be a villain; but still, both lay within the ken of the law, and the days had passed when a young heiress might be spirited away and murdered, on the skirts of her own father's estate, with impunity.

Evelyn had read of such incidents in romances; but then she did not regard herself as a heroine of romance, and felt convinced that a way would be found out of the snare into which she had fallen, through the contrivances of an unscrupulous man.

Her principal anxiety, indeed, even now, was on her father's account. But what did the man mean who denied her the name of "Evelyn Hedley?"

That man, in the meantime, had threaded his way across the park, and through the plantation towards an old empty cottage, half-ruinous, which stood by the side of a slime-covered pool, called by the woodcutters the Green Well.

It was a commonplace spot enough, with no terrible traditions about it; but an individual was there, whose appearance alone might have conferred upon an even more prosaic place an aspect of melodrama.

This was Sir Norman Hedley, pacing restlessly up and down, now keeping within the shadow of the trees, now emerging from it and gazing about, as if expecting the arrival of someone who did not come.

At sight of Mathew Drake, he started.

"Why are you dogging my steps?" he exclaimed, with the fierceness of desperation.

"By appointment, Sir Norman," said the other, coolly. "You did not recognise your old friend in his white beard. But confess that I did you a service. The disguise was necessary, to me, at any rate."

"Where is Evelyn? What is she doing?"

"Probably under surveillance at the Chase. The magistrates are there by this time."

The baronet groaned in his heart. "That she, the child of his love, in whom his pride had rested, should denounce him as the most infamous of criminals, was scarcely to be borne. That he must hide from her! There was agony intense—humiliation unspeakable—in the thought.

"What is to be done?" he asked, after a long silence, during which Mathew Drake watched his face intently.

"Compel the marriage of your daughter with me, and I guarantee that she is as secret as the grave."

"But how? She thinks me guilty. What influence, then, can I have over her?"

"This is no place for an interview. Follow me. Have you money?"

"Enough for the present; show the way," said the baronet, with some slight degree of returning haughtiness in his tone.

They passed along a fringe of the plantation, whence were visible the high roofs of Norman Chase—its hundred windows crimsoning in the light of the western sun, and Sir Norman reflected bitterly upon the idea that his daughter, seeking his shame and death, was there, pitiless in her justice, pitiless as that Venetian wife who, under a stern sense of right, surrendered her husband to the axe and block, though ready herself to die the instant after.

They went on, through a garden gate, and skirted round a dark and ugly pool, beyond which was a door in a long, lofty wall, otherwise blank. This door Mathew opened. It led to the foot of a broad stone staircase, which both ascended in silence.

Mathew, with the familiar air of a master, entered an apartment on the first floor, and beckoned Sir Hedley to follow him.

It was a plainly-furnished room, with a writing-table in the middle. Offering the baronet a seat, he himself sat down. Then, fixing his keen eyes on his companion's face, he said:

"We know each other?"

"We do."

"India?"

"Yes."

"The Chase?"

"Yes."

"That night?"

"Yes."

"Your daughter?"

"Yes, why all these questions?"

"They belong to one another. Now, Sir Norman, you are credited with the murder of your friend and guest."

"Heaven help me!" ejaculated the unhappy man.

"Your daughter suspects—nay, is positive, of your crime. Don't interrupt me. You remember Mainwaring's will. It left her a vast fortune, which you intended to enjoy. He patient—I am, for the present, only saying what she believes, as firmly as in her own existence. But the document was useless. It wanted all the parts that would have given it any value."

"What then?"

"Those parts were stolen by your daughter—were hidden, not destroyed—and are in Norman Chase now."

"With what motive?"

"Because she would not and you should not profit by that night's crime. It has weighed upon her conscience, until the load became too heavy to bear. She is a strange girl, with a determination of mind which, when excited, is desperate. Else, she would not have told this terrible secret."

"There is no secret of mine, scoundrel, as you know!" exclaimed the baronet, in a voice of fury, rising and glaring at the man who sat opposite to him, perfectly unmoved.

"Why, then, does Miss Evelyn Hedley accuse her father? And why does her father fly from his own house, like a felon?"

"Ah! Why?"

"This is the way of escape. Copy this letter, addressed to your daughter, and sign it. I will be the messenger."

Sir Norman read the letter, read it again, and then, with a face grey as ashes, and in a voice that seemed to hiss between his teeth, looking his companion sternly in the face, said: "Never, if death were coming in at that door as the alternative; never would I write such a letter to my child."

CHAPTER XIII.

Tiger—not daughter—what have you performed?
KING LEAR.

EVELYN and her father, captive under one roof, through the machinations of the same man, were not less divided in heart than if oceans rolled between them.

The one shuddered at her doubts—the other regarded his daughter as little less than a paricide.

But neither had the slightest inkling that the other was near, though both had begun to understand the motives of Mathew Drake in thus entrapping them.

It was a weary time for the young girl, though she experienced no positive personal fear.

That her abduction and detention were illegal she perfectly well knew, and also that, upon the least chance of communicating with the outer world, her release was certain.

But how to obtain that chance? She was a helpless prisoner.

If it be questioned whether such things were possible in England so near the present time, the recent revelations from the school at Sunbury ought to dissipate them.

A month passed away, during which Evelyn was exposed to no absolute annoyance. At the end of that time Mathew Drake made his appearance once more.

"Your father," he said, "has fled from home."

"I know it," she answered. "Where is he?"

"I cannot tell you. He is flying—not from me—but from you. You can recall him and save him."

"How?"

"By consenting to my terms. Herbert Leacholme, you are aware, has transferred his affections—is in love, to tell the truth—with Miss Fairleigh's fortune. Listen to me. I do not wish this marriage—my marriage and yours—to take place here, or ever to be heard of in the neighbourhood of Norman Chase—"

She interrupted him:

"Mathew Drake, it is my turn to speak and yours to listen. I gave an answer once. Consider that I have repeated it. Whatever happens, I will never bring shame on my father, nor he on me. Plot the worst you can, and leave me."

With an evil smile and a mocking bow, he obeyed, and Evelyn turned, in a half despair, to look forth from the window.

Little hope in that direction.

A mouldering wall, a broad channel of dark water, a lonely woodland beyond; this was all.

Neither human sight nor sound. Suddenly, however, a strange noise became audible, and she saw one part and then another, of the wall crumble into the water, which, from being still as a pool, had become a rapid and rising stream, overthrowing its banks, and swelling towards the foundations of the house.

At the same time tremendous clouds blackened the horizon, and deluges were pouring on the earth.

Why this sight inspired her with a strange confidence she could not have herself explained.

There was a break in the horrible monotony and silence of the moat.

That was something!

Anything—even a new fear—was preferable to the mute routine of her captivity.

At that moment the door of her room was opened, and the woman who had been in attendance upon her entered.

She seated herself by the side of Evelyn, took her hand, and, in a trembling voice, said:

"What are you to Mathew Drake that he should make me your gaoler?"

"I am the victim of his wickedness, and, still more unhappily, of his admiration. He wants me to be his wife. I would die rather!"

An expression of pain and pity passed over the wan and wearied face.

"From that doom I can save you," the woman said, "whenever it is imminently threatened. But, of course, you would escape from this, if possible?"

"Ah! how gladly!" exclaimed the young girl; "but I am in his power."

"Not if you are brave, and lose not a moment in delay. Are you afraid of the water?"

"I cannot swim, and I am afraid no boat could cross that torrent. Are you going to help me? Is there no one else watching? May I trust you?"

Thus Evelyn spoke, somewhat incoherently, but the woman took her hand, led her through the door, and went down a passage which sloped towards the high and dilapidated terrace of the moat.

A little gate stood open.

From it a narrow broken causeway extended to the opposite bank.

It was already submerged to the extent of three or four inches.

"Run across that," whispered the woman, "run as if for life. He may happen to see you from his den up above; but, before he can be here, the water will be boiling, and would sweep him away in an instant, if he tried to follow. But be quick; not a moment to spare!"

"Stay; what will become of you?"

"That matters nothing. Go!"

Instinctively Evelyn obeyed. The sense of liberty was too sweet for sacrifice, and, forgetful of danger, she darted upon the slippery path, splashed along, careless of wet or wind,

almost stumbled two or three times, and reached the opposite bank just as with another fierce roar, a fresh accession of the torrent came foaming down from the forest.

In her exultation she turned round.

The Black Moat was surrounded high with turbulent and breaking water; and in the little gateway stood Mathew Drake, with every evil passion flaming in his countenance.

It was impossible for Evelyn to repress a triumphant smile; but an instant afterwards it was regretted.

In an upper window, pale and painful to see, she recognised the face of her father.

Only a single glance was exchanged between these two; hers one of surprise, his of reproach, for, with a gesture of astonished sorrow, he immediately turned away.

The young girl had escaped for the time, it was true, but what step was next to be taken?

She was at a considerable distance, she knew, from Norman Chase, and, besides, what sort of reception might there await her?

In what direction did it lie? Who were its present occupants?

There had been a time when, in all confidence, she would have claimed the hospitality and protection of Fairleigh Manor.

All that was past, and the bitter remembrance of her broken love came upon the desolate girl to darken the strange dream in which, for a time not to be measured by mere days, she appeared to have been living.

Nor were there wanting physical discomforts to aggravate the wretchedness of her position. Exhausted by her desperate effort, soaked by the water through which she had rushed, and by the spray flung up high from it, hungry—for she was no Houdibras heroine who sent away her meals untasted—bare-headed, and at a loss what direction her flight must take, she still felt that she must, without delay, get away as far as possible from Mr. Mathew Drake and his Moat.

Following the first path, therefore, that opened from where she stood, the baronet's daughter, half-bewildered, walked straight on, as fast as her feet could carry her.

"I will find my way," she thought, when the confusion of her faculties had in some degree cleared off, "to Baronbury town, and go to those lawyers."

Which was a sensible resolve, and proved that Miss Evelyn Hedley was not expecting any knight in complete armour to come pricking along the alleys of the wood to her rescue.

Presently the woodland ceased, and was succeeded by a cheerful prospect of farms and fields.

To a farmhouse she would go, was the resolution of this common-sense young lady, and tell so much of her story as was necessary.

And she did so. Her appearance caused no little surprise, dripping, bare-headed, and generally disordered as she was; but she explained that she had escaped from a house in which she had been shut up against her will, had crossed the rising water, and had lost her way. This was enough.

The good people gave her a welcome, with all else she required, and Evelyn Hedley might have felt something like happiness had it not been for the haze in which her father's life had become more deeply and obscurely enveloped every day, since the occurrence of that unexplained tragedy at Norman Chase.

Still the reaction had come. The fatigues of youth are soothing, and the young girl slept as in an atmosphere of balm.

Early on the next morning she awoke in a state of perplexed surprise, which, however, speedily passed off, and she was received with comely but hearty greetings by the farmer's matronly wife.

No one had hitherto asked her name. It is a principle of hospitality, in some countries, never to do this, though the rule may not be generally observed in England.

But she, on her part, inquired the distance to Norman Chase, and the direction in which it

lay. There was an exchange of looks at the table.

"Are you going there?" at length said the farmer.

"Who is there now?" she asked, evasively.

"Not Sir Norman, you may be sure. It's too hot for him."

All her blood burned at these words, and her face flushed with a mingling of indignation and shame.

"Why, do you know him?" inquired her straightforward hostess. "Pity if you do."

"I am his daughter," she answered, proudly—almost fiercely, rising at the same time, and standing, as if impelled by the question that quivered upon her beautiful lips. "And what will you dare to say of him or me?"

The others rose also, and the woman, laying a hand on Evelyn's shoulder, spoke, after a long and painful pause, in a language to which the strength of her natural feeling gave a certain dignity:

"I have no pity for the man who commits so terrible a crime; but I can still less sympathise with the child who betrays him."

"Glad you didn't tell us that last night, miss," added the farmer. Sorry to have refused to take you in. But we have children of our own here, and you're not the daughter for them to follow by."

Evelyn laid a gold coin on the table—for they had taken nothing from her at the Moat—turned away, and, without so much as a single word, quitted the house.

There was some little good fortune in store for her yet.

At two or three miles distant she entered a little town, perfectly unknown to her, however, by sight and name, and ventured to inquire her way at a small, old-fashioned inn, where the people were civil.

There was nothing dishevelled in her appearance now to excite suspicion or surprise, beyond the fact that it seemed unusual for a young lady, richly-dressed, and of apparent high-breeding, to be wandering thus alone, ignorant of her own whereabouts.

"It's ten good miles from this to Norman-bury town," said the landlord, "but our old chaise can take you there in an hour and a half. Everybody in these parts knows Mr. Tyndall Thorpe."

The name of that highly-respectable firm had impressed him in favour of his young guest.

"Refresh yourself, miss," he went on, "in this room," pointing towards a little snuggerly which was his wife's especial sanctum, "and Bill will be ready in no time."

Evelyn was very glad of the opportunity, both of resting awhile and of journeying to her destination so easily.

Not long after noon she had reached Baronbury. Half an hour later the heiress of Norman Chase was closeted with the head of the firm, Tyndall Thorpe, Esq., solicitor, her father's confidential agent. His manner was evidently embarrassed.

Clearly and simply, she told her tale, beginning, however, only with the evening of her abduction, and concluding with her astonishment at discovering that her father had been an inmate of the same illegal prison-house with herself.

Mr. Tyndall Thorpe was a very tall, thin man, with iron-grey hair and whiskers, and an abominable habit of appearing to be thinking while he pretended to be listening.

When Evelyn had finished, he passed one hand two or three times slowly over his chin, and said, after a pause:

"Forgive me, Miss Hedley, you have told either too little, or too much. You have heard of the suspicions cast upon your father."

She only bowed.

"And of the imputations, with regard to him, made against yourself?"

"I have," she answered, wondering whither these questions tended.

"It is a painful task I have to perform," he said, rising and ringing the bell. "We have sworn information, from three witnesses, with respect to your language and conduct after this

frightful affair at Norman Chase; and now you have come to disclose his place of concealment. You have done your duty, Miss Hedley, at what cost to your filial feelings I cannot pretend to know. I must now do mine by obtaining a warrant for the immediate arrest of Sir Norman Hedley, on a charge of wilful murder, on his own daughter's denunciation."

It was not all at once that she comprehended his meaning. Then no cry or word came from her lips.

For the second time on that day she had heard similar words, imputing to her an impious crime, as she thought it would be.

She did not swoon; she had rarely ever done so in her life; but she looked at the lawyer like one incapable of understanding him, until a reply to his ring came, and a clerk stood in the doorway.

This brought her instantly to a recollection of the scene that had passed.

"Send him away," she passionately cried, "you have mistaken me! Everyone has mistaken me! I never—"

There was a knock, and the clerk who had withdrawn at a sign from his employer, announced:

"Mr. Mathew Drake."

Evelyn regained all her former composure.

"At least, Mr. Thorpe," she said, haughtily, "you, whom my father trusted, can protect his daughter from this man."

And she quitted the solicitor's office, as she had quitted the farmer's breakfast parlour.

Once more alone, without a purpose, hating herself for her blindness to the subtleties of the plot that was weaving round the master of Norman Chase, not daring to go to her ancestral home, not, indeed, daring for the moment, to determine upon going anywhere.

But a sudden light seemed to break upon her mind.

It determined her resolution.

She would conceal herself in the place where she was least likely to be sought—amid the gorgeous desolation of Norman Chase.

Some words let fall by Mathew Drake, at the Black Moat, had told her that it was once more empty, with shuttered windows, doubly locked doors, and not even a housekeeper to act as guardian of the property.

All the moveable valuables were safely stowed away. There was little in the ponderous furniture or voluminous hangings to tempt a thief.

But a companion of some sort she must have, both to keep open a communication with the outer world and to relieve a solitude which else might drive her mad.

She bethought herself of a woman—a her nurse in in unremembered childhood—a grave, steady, faithful servant, who had been pitilessly superseded by Mathew Drake's orders, and was, therefore, not likely to become an agent of his. This person lived in a cottage outside Chasefield Village. She entered readily into the plans of her young mistress.

"How shall we enter?" asked Evelyn.

"I have the key to a back door."

Thus it happened that Evelyn Hedley became once more an inmate of the vast and gloomy mansion, almost alone—entirely alone, so far as her plans and hopes were concerned.

What were these?

They will, in due time, explain themselves.

(To be Continued.)

FOREIGN NOTES.

From being a blot and an eyesore, the buffet at the Grand Opera (Paris) will become one of the most magnificent of its kind when the decorative work now in progress is finished. The twelve months will form subjects for twelve panels, and the artists (who have offered their services at the same rate of pay as mere paper-hangers) will divide the work amongst them thus:—M. Georges Clairin takes January, February, March, April, May, and June; M. Thirich, July and August; M. Escalier, September and October; and M. Duez, November.

The general designs and grouping of figures are from the pencil of M. Garnier, and to M. Chapron is confided the task of painting the scroll-work surrounding the panels. Besides this, the spaces over the two doors will be artistically decorated, and Mlle. Louise Abbéma is appointed to do one, while an artist has not yet been fixed upon for the other. The work is being rapidly pushed forward, and it is hoped will be finished by the end of the month.

CONVICTED.

CHAPTER LVII.

THE night, as we have said, was gloomy. A few pale stars gleamed in the dusky sky, but there was no moon. The wind blew damp and fresh from the sea.

The waves surged angrily against the base of the tall bluff, and made a sullen roar as of some wild and raging monster.

The castle lights were mostly extinguished, and Alex, confident that her movements had not been observed by her enemy, paced the upper terrace, keeping a vigilant lookout for the expected approach of her father.

Surely, he would come to her to-night. Believing that the supposed ghost was he, for she had also heard of the "apparition," she was sure that he was in hiding in the vicinity of the castle, and that he was anxious to communicate with her.

"The night he was seen by the footman upon the terrace I was in London," she said to herself, as she slowly walked in the deeper shadow of the marble balustrade. "He came to meet me, and I was not here. What can he think? Oh, if he would come now!"

She looked up at the castle windows. A light gleamed from Mrs. Ingestre's chamber; the other rooms were in darkness. The lower portion of the vast pile of buildings seemed closed for the night.

But Alex knew that the butler had not made his final rounds, to close and bar the doors, and that he would not do so for half an hour. By that time she hoped to have had an interview with her father, and to be safely under shelter again without having attracted attention.

A slight noise upon the terrace and near at hand suddenly startled her.

She halted and looked around, half in the expectation of beholding Mr. Strange, but in the gloom no one was visible even to her keen eyes.

She could not see the figure crouching in the denser shadow of a statue near the balustrade—a figure with glittering eyes and livid visage—the figure of Pierre Renaud.

She moved backward and forward, silent and alert, a slender, black-robed shape, with a lovely young face gleaming out of the shadow of her waterproof hood, startled at every gust of wind, so vigilant that her enemy dared not creep out upon her, knowing that he could not gain her side unobserved by her.

The minutes passed, and the half hour Alex had allotted to her vigil was near its end. She began to fear that she would be locked out of the castle, in which case what could she do?

"I must go in," she thought, anxiously. "I will return to my room, wait till the butler has retired, and then come out again secretly, leaving a door unfastened behind me. I would have done so, without this preliminary walk, only I was so sure that papa would comprehend my difficulties and come early."

No sound of closing came from the castle. A few minutes certainly remained to her. She walked to the extreme end of the terrace, and to the very verge of the beetling bluff, at the foot of which the sea raged in its wild, white fury.

The sea was very far below her; the grand, towering old castle, throned upon the bluff and coming to its very verge, cast a deeper gloom upon the spot where she stood.

This, of all places, seemed best fitted for a secret interview.

Alex bent over the edge of the precipice, half expecting to see her father climbing up by the steps cut in the rock.

So rapt was she in her watch that she was not conscious of evil approach. Pierre Renaud had crept from his concealment, and was stealing along in the shelter of the marble balustrade, softly, silently, with hushed breathing and gleaming, murderous eyes.

He crept up behind her unseen, unsuspected. Now at last was his opportunity. Some chance or subtle instinct made the girl start suddenly, as if to draw back from her dangerous position.

Too late! Pierre Renaud's hand seized her in a fierce, wild grip; he gave her a sudden impulse forward, and she went whirling down into the darkness, her wild shriek cutting the air, and rising above the roar of the angry sea.

Renaud stood for one moment motionless, panic-stricken, fearing less that agonised outcry had penetrated the castle walls; but no one appeared at doors or windows, and he drew a long breath.

Then he peered over the precipice into the seething abyss far below. No sign of the young girl was anywhere to be seen.

"She is dead!" he muttered, with a savage joy and exultation. "She'll be found in the morning, hundreds of feet below there, mangled and shapeless, and people will wonder at the accident. No one can suspect me of her murder. I have not been seen to leave the house. I would descend and look upon her dead body, only I must hasten to my room. If foul play is suspected I must be able to prove an alibi!"

With a last, long, peering look into the black abyss, he hurried swiftly to the castle, making his way to a side door opening upon the upper terrace.

The door was not yet locked; he effected his entrance, and hastened to his own room, meeting no one in the halls or corridors. His evil star was still in the ascendancy; he gained his own door unperceived.

And just in time, for he had scarcely vanished from the lower floor when the butler made his final rounds for the night, and closed and barred and bolted every outer door.

Pierre Renaud opened the door of his private chamber softly, his visage wild and disordered, and full of his savage exultation.

His eyes were gleaming still; his complexion was livid and ghastly; the spirit of murder still looked out from every sinister feature.

He entered his room, and closed his door. His wax-candles were burning mellowly; his fire was all ablaze; the sudden light blinded him for an instant.

As his vision began to clear, he flung himself into a chair, and laughed a strange, low, mocking laugh, such as a demon might have uttered.

A man started up on the hearth—he was John Wilson, the new fireman.

The sudden apparition deprived the valet momentarily of his self-possession. He had believed himself alone. He stared at the new servant with glaring eyes.

"Beg parding, sir," said Wilson, glibly, "I was mending the fire, sir, for the night."

He did not deem it necessary to confide to the valet that he had spent the evening in an examination of Mr. Pierre Renaud's effects, and that he had minutely examined every item of that individual's possessions then at the castle.

"You here!" gasped Renaud, finding his voice. "Blight you for startling me, you miserable sneak! What are you doing in my room at this hour?" and he regarded the man suspiciously.

"Only mending the fire, sir," quivered John Wilson, who seemed almost terrified at Renaud's wrath. "Mr. Puffet gave me orders, sir, as the French gentleman was to have his fire kept up."

"It's all right, then," said Renaud, somewhat mollified. "Get out!"

Wilson bowed humbly, and took up his hearth-brush and coal bucket and departed.

"Blight the sneak!" muttered Renaud, getting up to look at his reflection in a mirror. "Do my looks betray me? If the fellow were not a perfect dolt, he would have suspected that I had been up to mischief."

The fellow, not being a perfect dolt, did suspect that he had "been up to mischief," and keenly regretted that he had employed his evening in searching Renaud's effects instead of watching their owner.

Yet his evening had not been lost.

He had examined Pierre Renaud's bank-book, and discovered that the valet had a small fortune placed to his credit at a private City bank in London—a fortune quite beyond Renaud's possibilities of honest accumulation in his duties as valet.

He had also discovered that Renaud's store of jewels must have cost many times his probable salary during the past eighteen years.

Some of the jewels, he believed, were sufficiently important to have a separate history of their own, and their size, beauty, and lustre would have made them worthy a prominent position in the royal crown of England.

He had discovered, in short, that Pierre Renaud was as extravagant and lordly in his tastes as his master; that his annual expenditures, judging from his great variety of costly clothing, his receipts from tradesmen, of which there were several packets, and other indications, were equal to those of the son and heir of a wealthy house.

The money thus lavishly spent could not be honestly obtained in the discharge of his duties as valet, Wilson knew; but there were no tell-tale letters to convict him of the long-ago murder of the Marquis of Mountheron; no positive proof against him of the commission of that revolting crime except the possession of the diamonds, which might be proved to have belonged to his murdered master.

Yet Wilson, shrewd detective as he was, considered the case against Pierre Renaud very strong indeed.

As he went along the dim halls, however, he was haunted by the remembrance of the valet's countenance on entering his chamber, and his mocking, sinister laugh, and he felt that he might better have deferred his search and kept his eyes upon Renaud.

The valet, in the conviction that he had removed Alex from his path for ever, and that the snare he had laid for her father would result in entrapping the latter, presently resolved to go forth and watch against the appearance of Alex's father, who, he was persuaded, since the story of the ghost, was lurking about the castle.

"The girl was out watching for him, expecting to see him," he thought. "He will be sure to come to-night. I will go down and lie in wait for him. Jean should be about the place to-night too. As he came up from town with me and agreed to remain at the village in the daytime in the character of a commercial traveller, and to prowling about the castle, within reach of my summons, at night, he must be in the park, or on one of the terraces, at this moment. With his aid, I shall easily capture my game!"

Renaud quietly put his resolve into execution, leaving his room as silently as possible, and descending the stairs to a lower corridor. He found the halls dark, but groped his way to a side-door, which he unbolted and unbarred, and softly opened.

No one appeared to have heard his movements; he believed that every inmate of the castle had retired.

Yet a minute or two after he had closed the garden-door, it opened again and Wilson stole out upon his track.

The detective had determined not to lose sight of the valet again, and had waited in the dark hall to become perfectly sure that he could not leave his room again that night.

When Renaud stole forth, therefore, he knew that more mystery was afoot, and stole after him.

By keeping in the shadow of the castle, he

managed to fulfil his mission and to remain unobserved.

Scarcely an hour had passed since Renaud had wreaked his hatred upon the young girl who was to him an incarnate Nemesis. The night was still dark and gloomy.

He walked again to the edge of the bluff, and peered over into the abyss, and exulted in the fact that no human sigh or moan came up from its black depths.

"She is dead!" he said to himself again and again. "She is dead! And now for her father."

But Alex was not dead.

The same Providence that had watched over her through so many perils, and had preserved her from the snares of her enemy, had not deserted her now.

When she went whirling over the edge of the precipice she did not fall hundreds of feet upon the jagged rocks, and into the seething sea, as her enemy imagined.

About a dozen feet below the top of the bluff projected a narrow ledge of rock, upon which a scrubby bush or two had managed to find a scanty soil for a foothold.

Alex fell crashing upon this narrow projection and lodged in the scrubby bushes, bruised, helpless, insensible.

When her enemy had hurried away she had not been conscious of his retreat.

In the deep gloom she lay where she had fallen, a dusky, shapeless mass, half hidden in the dwarfed shrubbery, and seemed indeed dead.

Her wild shriek of mortal terror had reached other ears than those of Pierre Renaud. Her father had been prowling for some minutes about the grounds, waiting anxiously for her appearance.

He had come near the edge of the bluff, silently as a shadow, and had witnessed the attempted murder.

For one moment he had stood spell-bound by a horrible fascination, comprehending in one dread and awful flash that it was his Alex who was the victim, and that it must be Pierre Renaud who sought her life.

Then, as the valet beat a retreat, Mr. Strange recovered his faculties, and dashed down the steps in the rock like a madman, speeding to the sea below.

He carried with him matches, but by their dim and fitful flicker his wild and agonised eyes saw not the ghastly spectacle they expected.

There was no shapeless mass upon the cruel rocks that testified to the young life he believed so cruelly destroyed; no sodden garments floated upon the white foam that lapped the stones.

"Not here!" he whispered. "Good heavens! where is she?"

A wild hope traversed his stormy soul like a beam of lightning.

He turned and bounded up the flight of steps until he had gained the bluff.

Had the whole scene been an illusion! Was it a phantasm of a brain too long tortured and tasked?

Had he gone mad?

He flung himself at full length upon the terrace, and peered over the edge of the precipice.

The black gloom mocked him.

He lighted a match, set fire to a bit of paper, and watched it flutter on the breeze, seeming at one instant to die out, the next, to blaze into a quicker consuming.

A sudden lull caused it to drop.

It fell upon the little shrubs upon the ledge, and died out upon the instant—but not until the agonised searcher had seen the projecting bit of rock.

Could his child in her swift descent have lodged upon it?

He did not wait to reason. The steps were near the ledge.

He ran down again for a brief distance, and lighted a match.

By its feeble flicker he made out the dusky shape upon the ledge; he even saw the pale

gleam of the upturned face, and the sight endowed him with the strength of a lion.

Her position was most perilous.

If consciousness should suddenly return, and she should make an incautious movement, she would fall from her precarious lodgment to certain destruction.

If he hoped to save her, he must move quickly.

He crept from the steps along the jagged face of the bluff, clutching at every available support, and gained the ledge.

A match or two revealed to him the white, unconscious face of his daughter, and the fact that she still lived.

He had no time to examine into the nature or extent of her injuries, but caught her up in his arms.

Holding her to his breast with one arm, he used his free hand to assist his return to the stair.

His locomotion was difficult, even perilous.

A single misstep would send him and his precious charge into the abyss below.

He gained the step at last in safety, and sat down with Alex in his arms, trembling like a leaf.

What was he to do? The castle appeared closed for the night.

He could not summon assistance without betraying himself.

He had some knowledge of simple surgery; he could not lose sight of her until he had examined into the state of her injuries. Renaud might return at any moment to assure himself that she was really dead. His resolve was quickly taken.

As his strength came back to him, he arose, with Alex still in his arms, and moved along the terrace, skirting the castle, and made his way to the grim and dusky ruins.

As he entered the deeper shadow of the latter, he paused instinctively, beholding a man's head suddenly protruding from a tall, arched window, partly overhung with ivy.

"Is that you, Pierre?" whispered, shrilly, a voice, which he knew to be that of Jean Renaud.

Mr. Strange did not answer, but shrunk back out of sight.

Jean Renaud quitted the window to come forth a minute later at an open door.

But when he did so appear, Mr. Strange, with his slender and light burden, had completely disappeared.

"Pierre!" called Jean Renaud, softly. "Is it you, my brother? Pierre?"

But no one answered.

He dashed up and down the courtyard to the very door of the ruined chapel, which confronted him, grim and massive, barring his farther advance in that direction. He called his brother's name again and again, softly at first, then with rising anger.

His call was answered some minutes later by Pierre Renaud, who crept into the neighbourhood of the ruins like a ghost.

"Is it you, Jean?" he whispered. "What are you making such a cursed row for?"

"Why didn't you answer before?" demanded Jean Renaud, angrily. "I've waited here these two hours, hang you, expecting to see you. You told me to be at the ruins every night."

"I told you about the grounds."

"You said the ruins. And I've waited and waited, and you've played me a pretty trick, Pierre Renaud. Why didn't you answer me when I first spoke to you half an hour ago? Where did you disappear to so suddenly?"

"I wasn't here. I just this minute came from the terrace."

"I know better. I saw you, acting as sly and mysterious as usual. You disappeared as suddenly as if you had been swallowed up by the earth."

"My faith!" cried Pierre Renaud, excitedly, "you've seen the very bird I'm after! You spoke to him?"

"I called him 'Pierre'—"

"And so warned him that I was near, and put him on his guard. You're a pretty detective, you are, Jean Renaud! He's hiding among these very

ruins, and we must find him. We must capture him to-night."

Wilson was near at hand—sufficiently near to hear every word of this shrill whispering. He wondered what "bird" Mr. Pierre Renaud was "after."

It seemed to him that he had stumbled upon a very nest of mysteries, and his professional ambition was fired to solve them all.

"If our game is in the ruins," said Jean Renaud, sullenly, "he'll come out to see the girl. Instead of searching for him we'd better watch her."

"Do you take me for a clumsy idiot?" asked the valet, still in a shrill, penetrating whisper.

"The girl is dead!"

"Dead?" echoed Jean Renaud.

Wilson started, nearly repeating the word in his amazement.

"Dead!" declared the valet. "Did you think me an idiot to leave such a dangerous creature alive to effect my ruin? Did you think that she bore a charmed life, and that she would always escape me? Bah! A feeble girl like that, with all her shrewdness, is no match for a desperate fellow like me! She is dead—lying at the foot of the bluff, on the rocks in the sea, so mangled that her own lover would not be able to recognise her. She is out of the way. Now for the father!"

Jean Renaud had a dark lantern. The brothers reached the courtyard, Jean pointing out the spot at which he had seen Mr. Strange, and the pair investigated every nook and crevice in the vicinity.

Then they entered the ruins, beating a regular battue, visiting the vaults and dungeons, and the secret chamber which Lord Mountheron had exhibited to his visitors upon a memorable occasion.

No trace of the fugitive was discovered. The two men then penetrated to the chapel, through the door connecting it with the ruins, and which was never locked.

(To be Continued.)

SINNED AGAINST: NOT SINNING.

CHAPTER XLIV.

The accident of an accident.

BUTLER.

THE rector returned to the study, and there told the result of the interview.

The good little man was more bewildered than ever.

Dismissing Keith and locking up the register, he hospitably invited Henry Garthside to stay and have some dinner with them.

The hunchback was always nervous and ill at ease in the presence of many strangers.

Intensely sensitive respecting his unhappy personal appearance, he rarely held any intercourse with his fellow-men.

But he had a particular and peculiar desire to be in the company of Ulrica Warner just now, for he thought that it was more than probable the abstracted leaf would form the topic of conversation.

"Many thanks for your invitation," said Henry Garthside, "which I shall have much pleasure in accepting. But I should tell you that I want to leave this by the seven o'clock train."

"Oh, you'll have plenty of time," responded the rector. "We dine almost immediately, and the station is only about fifteen minutes' walk from this."

Mrs. Welland and her daughters had taken their leave when the rector returned to the drawing-room.

Kind little Miss Vincent hospitably welcomed Henry Garthside, and introduced him to Ulrica.

She gave a gasp as he entered the room, and

an expression crossed her face which did not escape the quick eye of Henry Garthside.

Ulrica Warner could not meet the steady, searching gaze of Henry Garthside, and he recognised this.

That she was connected with the fate of the missing page he felt perfectly sure.

Of course he had heard her whole action in the matter of the attempt to make away with Muriel from Leopold Ormiston.

He knew the whole nefarious business from beginning to end, and, in his grave, unsophisticated way, began philosophising in his own mind upon the strange chance which had thus brought him in contact with Ulrica Warner in this apparently out-of-the-way place.

During dinner the rector refers to the torn page; much to the agony of Ulrica, who fears—aye, actually fears—the calm, searching eyes of the hunchback.

"It is fortunate the sexton remembers the parties having been married here," said Henry Garthside. "Even that may be of some use in the matter we are trying to establish."

"Is the matter a secret?"

The inquirer a Mr. Vincent.

"No; not precisely."

Henry Garthside spoke with a certain amount of reticence.

"We are simply getting together all proofs of this marriage, as we have reason to fancy it may be repudiated."

"May I ask why?"

"That," replied Henry Garthside; "you must not ask me to say."

"Then the parties are both living?"

The speaker on this occasion was Ulrica Warner.

For her life she could not resist making the query.

"Yes, Miss Warner," replied Henry Garthside, looking steadily at her; "both are living—both Preston Rivers and Margaret Ogile."

Ulrica Warner—cool and wary plotter though she was—felt herself turn faint and sick, as she listened to Henry Garthside's words.

Then it really had been Muriel Oliphant whom she had seen with Leopold Ormiston on that moonlit summer's night by the quarry walk.

The very thought was maddening, and Ulrica was glad when Miss Vincent, with unconscious benevolence, gave another turn to the conversation.

It was only a little past six, dinner was scarcely over, when there was a stir in the hall.

A moment more and a servant entered the room and whispered something to Miss Vincent.

"Bring it in at once," Miss Vincent said, in reply.

The servant obeyed, and "it" proved to be a telegram for Ulrica Warner.

She hastily opened it, and read as follows:

From	To
Dr. Gordon, Pendleton	Miss Warner, The Rectory, Brentwood.

"Come home as soon as you receive this telegram. Your father has had an attack of paralysis, and you are required here immediately."

With a little cry Ulrica Warner threw the telegram across the table to Miss Vincent, who read it aloud.

"My dear Miss Warner," exclaimed the rector, in a shocked, pained voice, "I am truly sorry for your trouble. There is no time to be lost," he continued, with a man's brusqueness in coming to a conclusion. "Tell me what you want to do, and where you want to go to, and I'll see that everything is arranged for you."

"I want to go to the Pendleton Station," she replied; "but I fear I cannot get there to-night from this."

"Why, that is the very station Mr. Garthside is going to, also," exclaimed the rector. "Perhaps he will kindly take care of you."

"I shall have much pleasure in doing so," replied Henry Garthside; "but time is very

limited; had you not better be making your preparations, Miss Warner?"

Miss Vincent, in her true kind-heartedness, never left Ulrica Warner for one minute when she was making her preparations.

She had only her travelling bag to pack, and it was with the utmost diplomacy that she managed to be allowed to do it herself.

"My dear, I do wish you would sit down and let me do what is necessary," urged the good little woman.

"I feel so restless and miserable, dear Miss Vincent, that I like to be busy about something," replied Ulrica, as she dexterously placed the bag out of Miss Vincent's ken.

"But your strength, dear; it is not equal to it. Think now of all the nursing you have before you; think of how terrible it would be if you were laid up at the same time as your poor father."

However, Ulrica Warner, with her customary diplomacy, managed to baffle all Miss Vincent's suggestions.

An hour later saw her in the same railway carriage with Henry Garthside, and they steaming away in the direction of Pendleton.

"Do you live at Pendleton?" Ulrica inquired sweetly of her companion.

"No, I live some distance away from it."

"Then I presume Pendleton is your nearest station?"

"Oh, no, not by any means, but I am—" Henry Garthside did not like this cross-questioning—"I am just going to Pendleton to see some friends."

"Ah! indeed! I thought I did not know your appearance in the parish."

Henry Garthside winced as Ulrica said it.

"As the rector's daughter," she continued, blandly, "I naturally come in contact with all my father's parishioners."

"Naturally."

"Perhaps I know your friends?" inquiringly spoken.

"I daresay you do, Miss Warner. I am going to stay with Mr. Leopold Ormiston, of the Manor Farm House."

The hot blood surged over Ulrica Warner's face as he mentioned Leopold Ormiston's name, and then as quickly receded, leaving her deadly pale.

"Yes," she said, slowly, and with an apparent effort, "I know Mr. Ormiston; he is one of my father's chief parishioners. Have you ever been staying with him before?"

"Never."

"I thought not, as I had never heard your name. We know Mr. Ormiston very well indeed."

This passionate woman was longing, hungering even, to hear Leopold Ormiston's name mentioned by this stranger.

To tell the truth Ulrica was sorry to hear of the calamity which had overtaken her father, but—she could not help confessing it to her secret soul—she was not sorry for anything which took her back to Pendleton and to the neighbourhood of Leopold Ormiston.

The light began to fade, and the oil lamp at the top of the carriage cast but a fitful glimmer upon its two occupants.

Upon the plea of her delicacy, Ulrica Warner settled herself comfortably in a corner of the carriage.

She drew her shawls and wraps around her, and, closing her eyes, began to think.

She decided that the first thing to be done when she arrived home was to destroy all trace of the missing page.

Then, she would write down everything in cipher in her private diary, and, referring to everything gone by, would see how she must modify the plot if necessary.

Henry Garthside had esconced himself in the further corner of the carriage, and was occupied with his own thoughts.

The mere fact of the marriage certificate having been missed under such peculiar circumstances, was, to his mind, conclusive evidence that Ulrica Warner was mixed up in the matter.

Each had arrived at this stage of his and her reflections, when—hark!

A shriek! a shock! the confused murmur of voices!

An accident had happened to the mail train from Brentwood!

CHAPTER XLV.

The massive gates of circumstances
Are turned upon the smallest hinge.

SHRIEK after shriek rose upon the air of the summer's night.

There was a tremendous shock.

Every plank and every bit of ironwork in the carriages seemed to vibrate.

Then there was a terrific lurch, and the carriages fell sheer over the embankment—upon the top of which the rails ran—down a depth of about two or three hundred feet.

Beneath was the half-dry, rocky bed of a mountain stream.

The ravine was full of sharp-pointed rocks, and as the whole train of carriages crashed down upon them they speedily reduced them to splinters.

And the human beings inside!

Walls of agony arose, heart-rending shrieks drowned the hissing of the scalding steam, which was fast scalding to death those in the immediate vicinity.

They tried to put the steam-whistle into requisition, but failed, and there they all lay—the dead and the dying—until, as if by magic, the news of the disaster spread far and wide into the country, and help was immediately forthcoming.

Yes.

Quite as though by magic the people of all classes—rich and poor—flocked to the scene of the disaster.

Everything that kindness and ingenuity could suggest was resorted to in trying to extricate the sufferers.

But too many of them were beyond the reach of the kindly aid which would have succoured them.

The Rider on the Pale Horse had taken them up behind him, and journeyed with them to the great unknown land.

Here was a fair young bride and her gallant, handsome young husband, who was proudly taking her home to the pretty homestead he had provided for her.

There they lay—dead—clasped in one another's arms.

And there was a rosy, smiling babe, making Death a hideous mockery by playfully caressing the mother who would never more enfold it in her embrace.

As quickly as possible the ruins were removed and the bodies recovered.

Fortunately the night was fine, and the summer moon was on high, so that the workers were able to perform their sad task without let or hindrance from the elements.

The train had been unusually crowded, it being the tourist season, but in one first-class carriage there were but one man and a woman—the man, middle-aged and humpbacked—the woman, young and light-haired.

They were Henry Garthside and Ulrica Warner.

But the good friends who extricated them could give no account of them, and they could give no account of themselves, for they were both stunned, and Henry Garthside's injuries seemed to be of the more serious nature of the two.

Moreover, neither had any luggage.

The lady had a travelling-bag with her, but there was nothing to tell her name, her destination being inferred from her ticket.

Being a first-class passenger, and travelling without luggage, she attracted the attention of those who extricated her.

"Try," suggested a doctor who was leaning over Ulrica, and doing his best to revive her, "try if there be any ladies' luggage labelled 'Pendleton,' for that is where her ticket says she was bound for."

The luggage van was smashed to atoms. Nevertheless, the luggage was extricated from the ruins.

There was no luggage whatever for Pendleton.

"I think, doctor," said a gentleman who stood by, and who had taken an active part in rescuing the sufferers, "that we had better break open the travelling-bag found in the carriage with this lady. Perhaps we may find letters or something bearing her name."

"I think it ought to be done. She is very ill, and her friends ought to be communicated with."

"Being a magistrate for this county, I take the responsibility upon myself," said the gentleman who had first spoken.

So Ulrica Warner's bag was broken open, but nothing leading to the identification of her name was found therein.

Two or three articles of clothing marked with her initials, a few toilet requisites, a small writing-case containing some paper with writing upon it, the crumpled ink-stained leaf of a large manuscript book—such were the contents of Ulrica Warner's travelling-bag.

There was no name or address.

By the light of the lantern which a policeman held the magistrate inspected all these articles.

The crumpled paper he looked at curiously, and read over every entry upon it before replacing it in the bag.

"There is no clue here as to the lady's name save her initials, 'U. W.,'" said the magistrate. "However, there is a sheet of paper here bearing the entries of a number of marriages, and if due publicity be given to the fact of its having been found in this lady's bag it may lead to her identification."

"I leave that matter quite in your hands," returned the doctor. "Just get some one to look after the lady. I am required elsewhere."

And he hurried away, leaving Ulrica Warner yet stunned from the shock, whilst those around used every means in their power to resuscitate her.

It was not until she had been removed to a neighbouring farmhouse that she opened her eyes, and could fully comprehend the whole affair.

In obedience to the doctor's orders she was not allowed to speak.

Her injuries were very slight, and after having had a good rest she felt quite ready to get up and to proceed on her journey.

Not so Henry Garthside.

He lay in the same farmhouse, and his injuries were of such a nature that the doctor was seriously alarmed about him.

He was yet unable to speak or to give any account of himself.

Ulrica was questioned respecting him as soon as she was able to speak, and said he had been at the rector's, and had been travelling to Pendleton.

Beyond that, she said, she knew nothing.

It was quite late in the day when Ulrica gave these facts, but the news of the disaster had spread far and wide long before that.

"Dear me!" said little Miss Vincent, as she and her brother sat at breakfast together. "I do hope poor Miss Warner will find her father very much better."

"Ah, poor Warner!" returned the rector, as he meditatively chipped the shell of a fresh egg; "he's an old man now. He's an old man now. He must be considerably older than myself."

Miss Vincent bridled up.

She was only two years younger than her brother, but it was a sort of polite fiction between them—unexpressed, but tacitly admitted—that she was quite a juvenile sort of person.

"You are yet a hale, middle-aged man," said Miss Vincent. "You have no right to talk of feeling the effects of age for many a year to come."

The rector gave a comical sort of half smile, and rubbed his hand over the top of his bald head.

"Anyhow," he said, "my bald pate gives me proof positive that I have reached years of discretion, and that if not actually there, I am fast approaching the downhill of life."

"Many people become grey and bald early in

life," replied the staid little virgin, stiffly. "I remember our dear father was quite grey and bald at fifty. It runs in our family," she added, with a saving remembrance of her own scanty and hoar-frosted locks.

"At all events, let poor Mr. Warner be whatever age he may be," said Mr. Vincent, returning to his original topic, "it is a serious thing for a man of his age to get a stroke of paralysis."

"Very serious," admitted his sister; "if anything should happen to Mr. Warner, I wonder if he will leave his daughter well off."

"I really know nothing about his affairs. I daresay Miss Warner will marry."

After breakfast the good little rector sat in his study, trying to fix his mind upon next Sunday's sermon.

But he found it absolutely impossible to do so, let him try ever so much; yet the text and its application got somehow or other mixed up with the surmise:

"If anything were to happen to Mr. Warner what would his daughter do?"

The rector laid down his pen and thought:

Yes, he was decidedly inclined to agree with his sister that he was yet a hale, middle-aged man. Grey hair, scanty, and a bald head; absurd. Why, they were no signs of declining age or vigour. No, his sister was quite right.

Ulrica Warner was so companionable; and she flattered himself his society was not distasteful to her.

The rector very nicely made up his mind that whether his father survived or not he would propose to Ulrica Warner.

Like every other man in the world, he never for one moment anticipated non-success of his suit.

Nor did the thought occur to him that Ulrica Warner might have other arrangements in view for herself.

Such was the rector's state of mind when he heard his sister coming hastily along the passage.

Without knocking at the door as usual she hurriedly opened it, and stood there with a scared face that terrified the rector.

"What is the matter, my dear?" he inquired, rising in some alarm.

"There!" she exclaimed, holding out towards her brother the morning's copy of "The Downshire Mercury." "Read that."

And the good little woman was so overcome by her emotion that she sank down upon the nearest chair whilst her brother read as follows:

CHAPTER XLVI.

Oh! it is excellent
To have a giant's strength, but it is tyrannous
To use it like a giant. MEASURE FOR MEASURE.

"ACCIDENT TO THE MAIL TRAIN TO PENDLETON! A NUMBER OF THE PASSENGERS KILLED OR INJURED!"

"The train Miss Warner and that strange man went by," exclaimed the rector, in horror, reading no further than the heading. "My dear," looking at his sister, as he set down the paper in apprehension, "I hope our friends have been amongst those saved."

There was a curious expression on Miss Vincent's face, and an odd tone in her voice, as she replied:

"I don't think Miss Warner has been killed, but I think she has been injured in some way. Of Mr. Garthside there is no mention made. You had better read the paragraph."

"Read it for me," said Mr. Vincent, handing his sister the paper, and leaning his head upon his hand whilst he listened.

The local journalist had descanted glowingly upon the disaster—related in most effusive language, and with most suspicious minuteness, everything connected with the catastrophe.

Everything was made the most of.

But the paragraph which most concerned Mr. Vincent was that wherein Ulrica Warner was described, and more particularly where the contents of her travelling-bag were enumerated.

The rector and his sister looked at each other in amazement.

"A leaf from a parish-register, apparently," so said the journalist.

And Mr. Vincent listened and mechanically repeated the sentence.

"That is the leaf you missed," said Miss Vincent, decidedly, putting down the paper and looking over the top of her spectacles.

"My dear—my dear—we cannot be certain, and it is not charitable to jump to conclusions. The coincidence is certainly curious, and I shall be off at once to the scene of the accident."

"I think you are quite right to do so," replied Miss Vincent, drily and emphatically.

"Of course, my dear, of course. I'd go under any circumstances, considering the poor young lady was our guest!" exclaimed the rector, not detecting the meaning conveyed in his sister's words. "I feel it quite my duty to go all the more imperatively."

The rector set off on his mission of mercy, various conflicting thoughts occupying his mind.

He was utterly perplexed. So bewildering a circumstance had never happened during his whole jog-trot life.

The very idea of Ulrica Warner having torn the leaf from the register never once entered his mind.

He had no suspicions, and was therefore in the greater puzzle, and all the more at sea in his endeavours to unravel the mystery.

The mystery of how that sheet from his parish register could have gotten into Ulrica Warner's travelling-bag unawares.

"Terrible thing, Keith, that accident to the mail train last night," said the rector to Keith, as he was transacting some routine business with that worthy in the vestry, preparatory to leaving.

"Terrible, sir," was the laconic and grim reply. "I read the account of it in the 'Marcary,'"—for so Keith pronounced the name of the messenger of the gods.

"The lady—name unknown—answers to the description of Miss Warner," continued the rector. "I am just going to see about her."

"I'm sure it's the same lady, sir," returned Keith, in the same grim tone. "I'd look after the sheet of paper with the parish entries on it, if I was you, sir."

"I mean to do so, Keith—I mean to do so—and now, I think, that's all. You'll look after that fence by the churchyard, and Widow Brandon's coals, and if there's anything you want to know about you'd better go up to Miss Vincent. Yes, Keith, I've nothing more to say. I think—no, nothing more."

Ulrica Warner's system had received a severe shock—that was patent to anyone. But, anxious to proceed on her journey, she had so far exerted herself in the afternoon that she insisted upon being allowed to get up and to dress.

She knew nothing whatever of the report which had been inserted in the newspaper. Had she known, she would have suffered agonies—as it was, she was blissfully ignorant of the whole affair.

Her travelling-bag had been restored to her; the contents intact.

Even then adverse fate seemed to follow her, for she did not get any opportunity at the magistrate's house to destroy the leaf from the register.

It was becoming late, and Mr. Dewsbury, the magistrate, who had had Ulrica removed to his house from the farmhouse, volunteered to accompany Ulrica to the railway station.

Marlcombe, near where the accident had occurred, was a large market town, and Marlcombe Junction was the most important station upon the line.

Arrived there, Ulrica and her escort found the train would not be due for fully ten minutes, and that then it made a stop of ten minutes more at the station.

"I have just heard that the poor man, Garthside, is wonderfully better," said Mr. Dewsbury, as he sat with Ulrica upon the platform. "I believe you know him?"



[THE TELEGRAM.]

"I met him once at Mr. Vincent's the rector's, where I was staying, and we chanced to be travelling together; however, he tells me we have some mutual friends at Pendleton, so I shall let them know of his state."

Ulrica was glad of anything—no matter how great might be the risk which it might entail—which could bring her into communication with Leopold Ormiston.

Presently the train came in sight. There was the customary bustle amongst the intending passengers, who ran hither and thither on the platform collecting their impedimenta, and, as usual, seriously hindering the railway officials in the discharge of their duties.

The train drew alongside the platform, and soon disgorged a goodly proportion of the travellers. Mr. Dewsbury was looking for a comfortable carriage in which to place Ulrica, when Mr. Vincent hurriedly approached her, saying:

"My dear Miss Warner! I scarcely expected to see you able to travel!"

"And I am sure I never expected to see you here, Mr. Vincent!"

Ulrica introduced Mr. Vincent to Mr. Dewsbury, with her sweetest smile, but all the time she felt instinctively that there was something imminent in this visit of the rector's.

"We were so shocked, my sister and I, when we read the account of the accident in the paper this morning," continued the rector, as Mr. Dewsbury was fussily settling Ulrica in the empty carriage, "that of course I hurried off at once to learn all particulars about you, and that poor man Garthside who was with you. By the way, how is he?"

"Garthside," interposed Mr. Dewsbury. "Oh, he is better, much better, but yet in a very precarious state. We are taking every care of him."

"I am sure you are all very kind," returned the rector. "I must see Garthside before I leave."

"Certainly," replied the magistrate. "I'll take you to see him myself."

"We have only a few minutes to spare, Miss Warner," said Mr. Vincent, entering the railway carriage, and sitting down opposite to Ulrica, "and I have something particular to say to you."

Almost imperceptible was the start which she gave. Her face became a shade paler, and she tightly and secretly compressed her grey kid gloved hand.

The rector thought she looked very pretty, and wondered he had never before remarked how very much better a woman looked in a well-made, well-fitting, pearl-grey travelling dress; than in the dingy browns and blacks affected by his sister and her female friends.

Ulrica saw the look of admiration upon his face, and she determined to follow up her advantage.

"I had thought you had come simply to see me, that you were solely uneasy upon my account, and I felt pleased and gratified to think you had taken all this trouble for me!"

The words were accompanied by a swift look from her sparkling eyes—a look which quite upset the equilibrium of the decorous divine.

"Oh, my dear Miss Warner!" he commenced, in a reproachful tone, "I hope you do not for one moment think—?"

Ulrica held up her hand, invoked her solitary tear, and interrupting him, said pathetically: "It is no matter what I may have thought, Mr. Vincent. I made a mistake, that was all! Let me try and forget it!"

Mr. Vincent was bewildered. Could it be possible that this fine young woman, to whom he felt most warmly disposed, could actually have fallen in love with him? It looked like it!

And the good little man was in such a state of tumultuous delight, that he absolutely could not find appropriate words to express what he felt.

And as for the torn leaf of the register, he totally forgot it in his bewilderment of Ulrica's emotion.

It was all most flattering, and the little rector's vanity was most easily touched, although but few suspected it.

"Time is up, Mr. Vincent," said Mr. Dewsbury, just then appearing at the door of the carriage. "Come, my good sir, come, or you will be taken off to Pendleton with Miss Warner."

If it be true that

The woman who deliberates is lost

it is equally true with reference to "man" as represented by Mr. Vincent.

For one moment he hesitated. But the sensation of feeling very nearly persuaded that a pretty woman was almost in love with him, was so new to the little rector, that he literally could not tear himself away.

He deliberated, and he was lost! Caught by Ulrica Warner's wiles!

But not caught in exactly the way she would have wished, for, to her utter horror and consternation, the little rector said:

"I have something to speak to Miss Warner about, so I shall go on to Pendleton with her."

Ulrica Warner had a splendid command over herself.

Were it not so, she would inevitably have betrayed her feelings of rage and intense dismay.

She had used all her wiles then for nothing, for her object in being so excessively amiable had been with the view of warding off any disagreeables in the way of awkward subjects.

It was maddening to think how she had failed.

She was so enraged that, for a moment, she could not speak, and leaned back in the carriage with her eyes closed and her teeth clenched beneath her smiling lips.

Could anyone have torn the mask off, what a demoniacal face would have been revealed.

For it was the spirit of a demon, and not of a woman, which was at that moment animating the body of Ulrica Warner.

(To be Continued.)



[THE SYMPATHY OF GRIEF.]

THE LORD OF STRATHMERE; OR, THE HIDDEN CRIME.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Has sorrow thy young days faded,
As clouds o'er the morning bier?

Our hero was still lying on his pillow, his eyes closed, a faint smile on his lips, when Lord Strathmere entered the room.

Miss Pelham's visit had cheered and comforted him, reviving the dying embers of his hope.

Lord Strathmere looked down upon him with a devilish malignity and hatred.

"You do not look very miserable," he said, with a sneer.

Chandos started, opening his eyes.

"You here!" he exclaimed.

"Yes, I am here," responded Lord Strathmere, coolly. "Have you any objections? As Governor of New South Wales, the representative of his majesty, I believe I have a right to go anywhere I please in the colony."

Chandos made no answer.

"Miss Pelham has just been to see you," continued Lord Strathmere, stung by something of contempt in our hero's silence. "It is her last visit to you as Miss Pelham. Women never get over their weakness in regard to their first lover. I don't know but that compassionateness endears her to me. Of course, she told you that she is now my betrothed wife?"

"No, she did not."

"Well, she is. We are to be married in three months' time."

Chandos's white lip curled incredulously.

"You are not telling the truth," he said,

quietly. "Gerda Pelham is not engaged to marry you, Norman Brabazon. More than that, she will never marry you!"

Lord Strathmere's small black eyes emitted a dangerous glitter.

"Did she tell you so?" he asked.

Again Chandos was silent.

"I suppose you remember how her father worships rank?" continued the governor, in a low, hissing voice. "He wanted you for a son-in-law when you were heir to the Strathmere barony, and he supposed that our uncle would settle a handsome income upon you. But when the old lord refused to add a penny to your income, Mr. Pelham veered about to the other side of the compass, as fickle as any wind. He worships me now. My rank and position fairly dazzle him. To make me his son-in-law is the ambition of his life."

Chandos did not doubt the truth of this statement.

"That may be," he said; "but Englishmen do not sell their daughters, nor force them into unwelcome marriages."

"Oh! they don't?" sneered the governor.

"Mr. Pelham makes an idol of Miss Gerda, and by the very force of his love for her will win her consent to his wishes. She must comprehend that a union with you is impossible. Her father will not allow his heiress to remain single. Property, like nobility, obliges. I have not only Mr. Pelham's consent to my marriage with his daughter, but his positive assurance that he will obtain her consent also. You know the extent of his influence with her. She is a loving daughter, with exaggerated ideas of filial duty. I have no doubt whatever, that in three months' time she will be Lady Strathmere, and mistress of Government House."

He spoke in a tone of positive conviction. Chandos winced. A sharp arrow had found its way to his heart.

He knew only too well Gerda's love and reverence for her father, and he knew equally well her steadfast love for himself.

If she could not be urged into a hateful

marriage, might not her life be made burdensome to her.

"Mr. and Miss Pelham came out to Sydney as my guests," said the governor. "They reside at Government House, and Miss Pelham is looked upon by everyone as my promised bride. I have no fears for the future. As for you, Chandos, let me give you a word of advice. I caught a look on your face that night when you looked in the window of my drawing-room upon me that I did not like. You will do well to cultivate a proper spirit of humility, or you won't get on here. A proud spirit is soon broken. That officious old doctor will have nothing more to do with you. You are a convict, and will henceforth be treated as one, not coddled and petted. Better settle into the harness at once. The authorities have taken up your case, and you'll be sent to Norfolk Island if you put on airs."

Chandos could not control his indignation sufficiently to speak.

"Possessed by a dumb imp," sneered Lord Strathmere. "They know how to treat such cases here. You had better remember that you are a convict—"

"Who made me so?" asked Chandos, sternly, his eyes staring at his enemy in wild accusing.

The governor recoiled.

"Why do you ask me?" he demanded, changing colour. "Who made you a convict? Your own self, of course. Your haste to be rich so that you might marry Miss Pelham; your hatred of our poor uncle; your—"

"Not so!" cried Chandos, passionately. "I was made a convict by a deliberate villain and scoundrel; by a hypocrite, the murderer of our uncle—by yourself, Norman Brabazon!"

The governor recoiled yet further. The fiery eyes, the flashing face of his wronged cousin startled him.

The accusation had taken him completely by surprise.

"You dare speak so to me?" he exclaimed, huskily.

"Ay, to you, foul murderer! Our uncle loved you best; he cared for you, and trusted you, and you crept in upon him and assassinated him in his sleep! You may well tremble, Norman Brabazon, for, surely as there is a heaven, your position and mine shall yet be reversed. You will be the convict, and I shall be Lord of Strathmere!"

If a look could have slain, the slow murderous stare in the governor's stealthy eyes would have stricken Ralph Chandos dead upon his pillow.

Lord Strathmere crept a step nearer, his long snaky fingers twining themselves nervously.

There was murder in his heart as well as in his eyes.

He would have strangled Chandos then and there, but that the door swung ajar, and he was reminded the surgeon was without.

He recovered his self-command upon the instant.

"I advise you not to talk too much," he said, significantly. "I hope to see you in a better frame of mind when I come again!"

He glided away like a spirit of darkness, and Chandos, overcome with excitement, fell fainting upon his pillow, from which he had half arisen.

"I find Chandos in a very violent mood," said Lord Strathmere, as he walked away with the surgeon. "He is a dangerous fellow—very dangerous. I must speak to Captain Archer about him!"

His lordship remounted and rode home-wards.

"Ralph Chandos suspects too much," she thought, grimly. "Gerda must have expressed some such suspicion to him. Something must be done with my enemies directly. Chandos must die—but how?"

Lord Strathmere, upon arriving at Government House, proceeded to his own private room, and gave himself up to reflection.

Various incidents had occurred, of late, to cause him serious uneasiness. The path of guilt that had seemed so broad at first, and so easy to tread, was now becoming narrower and more difficult.

It was true that his wickedness had been crowned with the most perfect success—the murder he had committed in cold blood had brought him rank, wealth, and honours. His ambition was nearly satisfied, but now dangers had arisen that required all his wily scheming to meet and overcome.

In the first place, he heartily distrusted Meg Miner, of whose marriage to Crowl he was ignorant.

He knew her to be attached to Crowl, and he dreaded her influence over his confederate.

She was a wholesome, warm-hearted, honest girl, of a respectable family, and had been well brought up.

He knew that the Strathmere village smith was a pious man.

If Meg knew his secret, how long would she be likely to keep it?

"With her bringing up, even her love for Crowl, and her fear of getting him into trouble, will not hold her to perpetual silence," he thought. "She is dangerous to me. How shall I get rid of her with the rest?"

He had been unable to remonstrate when Miss Pelham had dismissed Susan Priggs and taken Meg in Susan's place, the more especially as Mr. Pelham approved the change.

The banker had never liked the convict-woman, and was averse to having her about the person of his innocent young daughter.

He had, therefore, welcomed honest Meg with actual delight, and Susan Priggs was now house-maid, with secret orders to keep up a constant espionage upon Miss Pelham and her attendant, which orders she executed as faithfully as possible.

The convict-woman had reported the substance of several interviews between the young mistress and maid, which she had overheard, and

the nature of these reports was such as to anger Lord Strathmere and to excite his apprehension.

Meg was dangerous—so he again assured himself—and must be removed.

And there was Crowl, the witness of his crime, whose testimony, if believed, would hang him.

Crowl demanded that legal settlements upon himself of an annuity of a thousand pounds should be made, and Lord Strathmere, while professing willingness to accede to this demand, had warded off the settlement until now. But he could ward it off no longer. Crowl had grown desperate.

The slights of the governor's guests, his love for Meg, his reviving desires of a sheep-farm and a home of his own, all incited Crowl to urge the fulfilment of his demands.

The repeated attempts upon his life, the governor's singular delay, inspired Crowl with even greater haste than he would otherwise have exhibited.

He felt unsafe in Sydney, and was anxious to depart from it.

"I could get rid of him by settling the annuity upon him," thought Lord Strathmere, "and yet I dare not do that. Such an action could not be kept secret, and would inevitably provoke inquiry and suspicion. People would ask what this graceless, low fellow is to me. They would suspect that I was in his power—I dare not sign the settlements. He will not take my word; he will not accept a payment outright, and give me a quittance of him. He is afraid he may lose money, and he wants a permanent bank to draw upon. I can't settle with him. I must get rid of him also."

And then he thought of Mr. Carew. His two secretaries had quarrelled all the morning, and he had kept out of their way; but he could not keep out of the way always, and how was he to decide between them? He could not send away Crowl.

Mr. Carew possessed connections and influence. He was an estimable gentleman. What excuse could he make for dismissing him?

"I wish I had Crowl and the girl Meg, and Chandos and the whole world in one great boat," he said to himself, savagely, "and a million tons of gunpowder in the hold! I'd blow them all up with the greatest pleasure!"

His words certainly had the merit of being sincere, whatever graces of humanity they may have lacked.

He was considering his position when Mr. Carew, with a very flushed face and a very agitated manner, entered his presence.

"My lord," he exclaimed, "I am refused my own desk by this low person, Crowl. He has actually dared to dismiss me from your service. What am I to do?"

"Do?" repeated the baron. "Deuce take it. Carew, how should I know?"

"Am I to accept my dismissal at the hands of a low cad like that?" asked Mr. Carew, stiffly.

"Why, no, of course not. I couldn't spare you, Carew," said the governor, smoothly. "You are indispensable to me. You are familiar with the ropes, you know, and I esteem you highly."

Mr. Carew brightened.

"Then Crowl is to go?" he questioned.

"Well, I don't quite see my way to dismissing him just yet," acknowledged Lord Strathmere. "You see, Carew, this Crowl once saved my life, and he presumes upon my gratitude. I must look him up a birth somewhere, I suppose, but for a few days he might remain here."

"But your excellency cannot expect me to associate with him," said Mr. Carew. "He has insulted me, treated me with the grossest indignity. He has ordered me from Government House. He is not a gentleman. The officers wonder that you allow him to remain—"

"The officers will do well to mind their own business," said the governor, with excessive plainness. "As I said, Crowl saved my life, and I can't fly in his face and send him about his business. If you are averse to associating with him, Mr. Carew, I do not desire to force your inclinations. He will be here but a few days

longer. While he remains, you can take a vacation, if you like."

It was evident that Mr. Carew was not delighted, but he did not pursue the subject further.

He bowed courteously and withdrew. His excellency resumed his meditations.

While he was pondering darkly upon evil schemes, Miss Pelham and her new maid were upstairs, discussing the subject that so greatly occupied him.

"You saw Mr. Chandos, Meggy," said Miss Pelham. "How frightfully ill he looked! Oh, Meggy, when you think what he was—the proud, young heir of Strathmere, loved by everyone who knew him, gay and light-hearted, generous and kind to everyone, and see him as he is now, ill and a convict, suffering for the crime of another, I should think your heart would melt within you. Oh, Meggy, how can you let him suffer so when you might save him?"

She stretched out her hands to the girl imploringly, and Meg sank down at her feet, sobbing aloud.

"I never realised until I saw the young master how great the wrong is that has been done him," wept the girl. "I would give my own life to free him; I would indeed, miss. I have begged Tom to save him, but Tom's afraid, and he's that greedy—"

"I will buy you the farm you want," interposed Miss Pelham, eagerly. "Only induce Crowl to tell the truth."

"But he'd be punished for the burglary. And he says he'd be punished for being an accessory to the murder. He saw it done, and never raised an alarm and never told—"

"But he could turn queen's evidence," said Miss Pelham. "Murderers do that often, and go free. He should have the best counsel. We would save him. Oh! Meggy, do persuade him!"

"I will, miss, if persuasion is possible. I feel like a murderer myself ever since seeing the dear young master. I'll go on my knees to Tom—but I feel it's all no use. He don't dare tell." And Meggy gave way to a fresh flood of tears.

"I will see Crowl myself this evening," said Miss Pelham. "He must tell the truth. He must! He must!"

Below stairs, in his private room, Lord Strathmere continued to scheme and plan to make himself the more secure.

He could not understand why his attempts to rid himself of Crowl had so miscarried. Every effort to destroy his confederate had been balked by the fellow's guardedness and caution.

"I have left the matter too much to others," thought the arch-villain. "If one wants work well done one must do it one's self. He is always wide-awake. How can I take him un-awares? If he were dead, the possibility of trouble would be for ever destroyed. I could accuse the girl Meg of theft and have her punished. That would rid me of her. Chandos I shall deal with after a more elaborate fashion. After all, the matter is in my own hands, and I can arrange everything to suit myself. I have nothing to apprehend from anyone save Crowl. He alone knows anything of the murder. He alone is a source of danger to me. Crowl dead, no one can prove a single thing against me. Crowl must be removed, first of all."

He reflected that his confederate was fond of a social glass, and that he had a particular preference for brandy.

A decanter filled with a choice variety of this liquor always stood in a private cabinet of the governor's own room.

There was in the same cabinet a small medicine-chest, which Lord Strathmere had brought out from England.

He arose and locked the door, and examined the small collection of medicines.

There were among them one or two deadly poisons, put up for possible use, Lord Strathmere having had a fancy that his heart was diseased.

He examined these poisons carefully, selected one phial, and deliberately emptied its contents into the decanter of brandy.

He then relocked his chest and cabinet, unlocked the door, and resumed his seat.

Some ten minutes later Thomas Crowl sauntered into the room, insolent of manner, as he had grown of late, and very familiar.

"I've sent that Carew packing," he observed, flinging himself into a chair. "I think he's discovered that I am of more consequence than he is—the beggar! I came in to talk business, Gov. I am getting tired of society, and I'd like to leave Sydney. My going depends on you. If you're fond of me and want to keep me here, you have gone the right way to work. But if you feel, as I do, that we have had enough of each other, you'd better have those settlements drawn up."

"I was just thinking about it."

"Oh, you were? You've hung off oddly about it, I must say. I am anxious to get away—the sooner the better. I know all about you, Gov. You've tried to kill me several times—"

"I!" cried the governor, in pretended horror.

"Oh, you needn't put on indignation. A man who would assassinate his old uncle in his sleep wouldn't mind killing a fellow like me to save himself from being hung," said Crowl, with refreshing candour. "I am wide-awake, Brabazon—"

The governor frowned.

"You've taken to calling me Brab, lately," he exclaimed, angrily, "and I don't like it."

"Norm, then," amended Crowl. "We're chums, and I mean you shall feel it, until you sign those settlements. I shall call you any name I please before people. I shall do it to-night in your drawing-room."

"This is insufferable—unbearable."

"Cut it short, then."

"I will! I'll get rid of you this very day. If I sign those settlements, and pay you a thousand pounds down, you agree to take yourself out of Sydney and trouble me no more?"

Crowl assented eagerly.

"Then you can summon my lawyers to me at once," said the governor. "I will get rid of you this very day. I have borne your presence here until I can bear it no longer."

He arose and unlocked his cabinet. Crowl saw him pour out a half-glass of brandy.

"I don't mind taking a drink with you, Gov," he exclaimed, falling into the trap so artfully set for him. "Give me a glass."

"Pour for yourself," said Lord Strathmere, taking up his own glass and moving away. "I am not your servant."

Crowl poured a liberal draught into his goblet. Lord Strathmere seized the opportunity, the man's back being turned, to empty his own glass slyly upon the carpet.

"Here's to our speedy separation," said Crowl, drinking rapidly. "You're a perfect demon, Gov, and I shall feel freer when I am out of Sydney, and out of your reach. If you intend to put any assassins on my track, you'll have your trouble for your pains. I'm on the look out for treachery, and I shan't go out alone after dark while I remain in Sydney. And now I'll step up and change my coat and be off for the lawyer!"

He went out, slamming the door vigorously. "He's disposed of!" said Lord Strathmere, exultantly. "In ten minutes he'll be a dead man!"

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Life is not all sunny days
Even to those whom fortune blesses.

THOMAS CROWL went up to his own room to change his outer garments, and prepare himself for his intended visit to Lord Strathmere's solicitor.

He was full of exultation at his apparent success in bringing the baron to terms, and yet a secret uneasiness pervaded his joy. At the very moment of leaving the governor's private room, he had glanced back and detected upon his lordship's swarthy visage a sinister joy that strangely puzzled and exercised him.

"He may intend to outwit me yet," he

thought; "but he'll find me a match for him. Blame me if I don't blow the whole thing if he tries to play me false, or put me off longer. He's tried to kill me, time and again, and I've put up with his attacks and said nothing, trusting to my own wits and to Meg to circumvent him. If he intends to play any games on me to-day," Crowl repeated darkly, "he'll find me ready for him."

Lord Strathmere had not been able to closely calculate the effects of the dose he had given to his confederate, but he had expected that death would ensue within ten minutes after drinking the poisoned liquor.

He had not wished Crowl to die in his presence, lest such death should bring suspicion upon himself.

He believed that Crowl would die instantaneously, as if stricken with apoplexy, either in his own chamber or in the street and that the man would not have time even to suspect his lordship's treachery.

Upon some constitutions, the poison he had given would have acted as described, but it did not so act upon Thomas Crowl. He perfected his toilet and entered the hall whistling softly to himself.

At the same moment Miss Pelham's bedroom door opened and Meg came out to meet him.

"Well?" whispered the young woman who had urged upon him the necessity of an immediate settlement with Lord Strathmere. "Did you tell his lordship what I advised, Tom?"

"Yes, and he gave in—ah, what a pain! He is going to make the settlement I want, Meg. I am to go for his solicitor."

"How pale you look! Are you ill?"

Crowl's features became suddenly convulsed with agony.

He staggered back, a cold sweat starting from every pore of his visage.

"I believe I'm poisoned!" he gasped. "He gave me brandy—I remember that look—he's poisoned me!"

Meg was prompt in emergency. Without waiting to question her husband, she hurried him back to his room, and bade him lie down. Then she ran down to the kitchen and mixed a tumbler of mustard and warm water, with which she hurried back.

She found Crowl in great agony, groaning and writhing and frothing at the mouth.

She administered the mustard, and when it had done its work, sent in haste for Dr. West, who was the nearest physician.

During the next half hour life and death fought for the mastery over the body of Thomas Crowl.

The doctor tried every remedy known to him as applicable in such cases, the nature of the poison being detected by him at once, and at last pronounced the patient out of danger.

"You will need to be very careful," he said, gravely. "You've had a narrow escape, Mr. Crowl."

"I know it," gasped Crowl, feebly and vindictively. "It was the governor. He poisoned me, but I'll be even with him!"

The doctor stared aghast.

"The governor?" he repeated, incredulously.

"Yes," said Meg, in her honest, straightforward manner that went far to carry conviction. "Thomas knows a secret of his lordship's, and his lordship wants him dead. This isn't the first time he has attempted Tom's life!"

"He'd better have been honest with me," whispered Crowl, faintly. "Do not tell anyone what I have said, doctor. The time is not come to reveal the truth."

"I should not dare repeat a word you have said," declared Dr. West, in a shocked voice. "There must be some mistake. I advise you to say to no one what you have said to me, or you may get yourselves into trouble."

He left some draughts and potions, with necessary directions for their administration, and took his leave.

As he slowly descended the stairs he reflected upon Crowl's terrible charge against the governor.

It seemed utterly preposterous—a vagary unworthy his consideration—and yet—

He remembered that Crowl was socially far inferior to Lord Strathmere, and that he had been received by his lordship as an equal.

He had had a conviction that there was some mystery between the two, and that Crowl possessed some hold upon the governor. Might not the story be true, after all?

As he strode along the lower hall, grave and preoccupied, Lord Strathmere emerged from his private room and greeted him courteously.

He noticed that the baron's face was colourless, and that there was a curious expectancy in his small, black eyes.

The governor had been waiting impatiently for tidings of Crowl's death.

He had not dared to question the servants, lest his agency in the man's illness should be suspected.

His door had been kept ajar, and he had seen the doctor pass along the hall in great haste.

Seeing him now return slowly, and with more than his usual gravity of demeanour, he believed his plans successful.

"A sad case, doctor," he said, hypocritically. "A very sudden death. It was apoplexy, I suppose? Crowl always had an apoplectic look, I think. He went off very suddenly? He was dead when you arrived, was he not?"

The doctor scanned the swarthy face of his excellency curiously.

His eyes seemed suddenly opened to the wicked soul that lurked beneath those plausible features.

"No," said the doctor, quietly, "he was not dead when I came."

A flush leaped to the cheeks of the governor. "Not dead then?" he questioned. "Why, I thought his death was instantaneous. Did he say anything?"

"Not much," answered Dr. West. "He was too ill to speak."

Lord Strathmere looked relieved.

"Then he passed away in silence?" he asked.

"You and I seem to be talking at cross purposes, my lord," said Dr. West. "The man has not had a fit of apoplexy. He is not dead!"

"Not dead?"

"On the contrary, he is out of danger!"

The governor recoiled a step, looking dumfounded. Such a possibility had not occurred to him. He commanded himself only by a stern effort, but his agitation appeared in his eyes.

"I—one of the servants told me that Crowl had fallen dead from apoplexy," he exclaimed. "A singular and incomprehensible mistake. I shall rate the fellow soundly. Then it was not apoplexy? What was the matter?" he demanded, eyeing the surgeon keenly.

"It was some trouble of the stomach," replied the doctor, evasively. "He had taken mustard-and-water internally before I came, but was still in danger. I am sure that he will be quite well again in the course of a few hours!"

He bowed respectfully and walked on, Lord Strathmere returning to his private room.

"So I made another botch of it," exclaimed the baron, in a tone of chagrin. "That's my third failure to take his life. I laid the other failures to the cowardice of the convict I employed, but I thought that this time I had made all sure. Hang the fellow! What's to be done now? Does he suspect that he has been poisoned?"

While the governor was considering this question, Dr. West returned home. His invalid guest was now able to sit up, and awaited his return in the little surgery where the two spent much of their time.

Dr. Marsh was thin and showed traces of his severe illness in his sunken cheeks, hollow eyes and pallid complexion. His anxiety in regard to Ralph Chandos had greatly impeded his thorough recovery, and he was thinking of our hero and endeavouring to devise some plan for his relief when Dr. West entered.

The preoccupied manner of his host attracted his attention. His inquiries elicited a full account of the illness of Thomas Crowl, and the accusation both Crowl and Meg had made

against the governor, with the subsequent conduct of Lord Strathmere.

"An odd case altogether," summed up Doctor West. "It puzzles me."

"I think I have the key to the puzzle," interrupted Dr. Marsh, with energy. "The fellow holds some secret of Strathmere, who wishes to put him out of the way. And that secret, I believe relates to the murder of the late Baron Strathmere."

"How? What can you mean?"

"I mean that the present Lord Strathmere and Thomas Crowl are partners in villany, and that between them they murdered the late baron. I mean that Ralph Chandos is innocent of that murder, as innocent as you, West, and that Lord Strathmere will not be content until my poor boy is dead! Listen, and I'll tell you the whole story."

He rehearsed the story of the Strathmere murder, and then told how Chandos had been convicted of the crime. He described the courage and nobleness of our hero, his patience and unselfishness, and exclaimed:

"I will devote my life to his rescue, and to bringing his cousin to justice. I think Crowl may be wrought upon to tell the truth. I am able to go out, and I am going to Government House to see him and urge upon him the necessity of confessing."

"The man is angry enough at the governor to do anything to injure him, provided he can do so with personal safety," said Dr. West. "Your advice and persuasions may have some effect. I will accompany you to the Government House grounds, and then return to the hospital and look after young Chandos, whom I have visited regularly. I have tried to obtain permission for you to visit him, but the governor has given special orders, I think, that you shall not be allowed to see him."

Dr. Marsh sighed heavily.

"If I thought this awful injustice were to go on much longer," he exclaimed, "I should pray that I might die at once. My poor boy! I wonder he does not lose all faith and courage. I have thought that it might be well to procure Crowl's arrest on a charge of murdering Lord Strathmere, but we have no evidence to offer, and suspicion without evidence goes for nothing."

Dr. Marsh exchanged his dressing-gown for a coat, put on his hat, and, accompanied by his friend, walked slowly in the direction of Government House.

He entered the grounds alone, and made his way to the state-entrance of the building.

A servant gave him admittance, and he asked to see Miss Pelham.

He was shown into a reception-room, and the young lady came down to him almost immediately.

(To be Continued.)

DYING WORDS OF CELEBRATED PERSONS.

"Head of the Army."—NAPOLEON.

"L'Isle D'Elbe, Napoleon."—JOSEPHINE.

"I must sleep now."—BYRON.

"It matters little how the head lieth."—SIR W. RALEIGH.

"Kiss me, Hardy."—LORD NELSON.

"Don't give up the ship."—LAWRENCE.

"I'm shot if I don't believe I'm dying."—CHANCELLOR THURLOW.

"Is this your fidelity?"—NERO.

"Clasp my hand, my dear friend, I die."—ALFRED.

"Give Dayroles a chair."—LORD CHESTERFIELD.

"God preserve the Emperor."—HAYDN.

"The artery ceases to beat."—HALLER.

"Let the light enter."—GOETHE.

"All my possessions for a moment of time."—QUEEN ELIZABETH.

"What! is there no bribing death."—CARDINAL BEAUFORT.

"I have loved God, my father, and liberty."

—MAD. DE STAEL.

"Be serious."—GREGORIUS.

"Into thy hands, oh, Lord."—TASSO.

"It is small, very small indeed (clasping her neck).—ANNE BOLEYN.

"I pray you, see me safe up, and for my coming down, let me shift for myself" (ascending the scaffold).—SIR THOS. MORE.

"Don't let that awkward squad fire over my grave."—ROBERT BURNS.

"I feel as if I were to be myself again."—SIR WALTER SCOTT.

"I resign my soul to God, and my daughter to my country."—JEFFERSON.

"Am I so far gone?"—NIE BUHR.

"There is not a drop of blood on my hands."

—FREDERICK V. OF DENMARK.

"Let me hear once more those notes which have so long been my solacement and delight."

—MOZART.

"A dying man can do nothing easy."—FRANKLIN.

"Let not poor Nelly starve."—CHARLES II.

"Let me die to the sounds of delicious music."—MIRABEAU.

"The Lord reigns, let the earth rejoice."—REV. DR. E. CORNELIUS.

"Remorse."—JOHN RANDOLPH OF ROANOKE.

"Doctor, I think I am getting weaker, feel my pulse."—JOHN NEWLAND MAFFITT.

"Adieu, my beloved Cuba; adieu my brethren" (the instant before his execution).—GENERAL LOPEZ.

"Sister, I am weary, let us go home."—NEANDER.

"But even the log on the Delaware has its care-taker."—DR. JOSEPH PARISH.

"How violent is this disorder, how very extraordinary it is!"—STEPHEN GIRARD.

"I forgive the authors of my death, and I pray that my blood may not fall upon France" (the moment before he was guillotined).—LOUIS XVI.

"I'm most gone."—REV. ANDREW TODD.

"It is well."—WASHINGTON.

"Independence for ever."—ADAMS.

"It is the last of earth."—J. Q. ADAMS.

"I wish you to understand the true principles of the government. I wish them carried out. I ask nothing more."—HARRISON.

"I have endeavoured to do my duty."—GEN. TAYLOR.

"Doctor, I am dying very hard, it seems as though I shall never get through with it."—VICE PRESIDENT KING.

"I could wish this tragic scene were over."—QUINN, the Actor.

"God bless you all. A general good night."

—DR. CHALMERS.

"I still live."—DANIEL WEBSTER.

"My son, don't leave me. I'm going soon."

—HENEY CLAY.

WIRING WALLS FOR FRUIT TREES.

The system of wiring walls with horizontal lengths of galvanised zinc wire has long been strongly recommended as a great convenience, as also a great saving in time and labour. But there is a conviction growing up in the minds of some fruit cultivators that the system is not an unmixt blessing. One of these, in pruning his peach and nectarine trees during the winter, had his attention arrested by the number of shoots that appeared as if they were seared or burnt through just at the point where they were attached to the lines of wire. The consequence was the shoots were rendered worthless for fruit-bearing purposes, and it was deemed advisable to cut them clean away. As a matter of course it was a great sacrifice to do this, but it was the only thing to be done under the circumstances.

The theory held is that these galvanised iron wires are peculiarly sensitive to currents of electricity, that they are readily acted upon during thunderstorms, and that the force of the current acting directly on the shoots passing across the wires was so strong as to actually

sear the wood. We must not be too ready to accept this theory; at the same time it is one requiring investigation, and we are glad to know that during the coming summer careful observations will be made, and the deductions made therefrom duly recorded. It needs to be done in different parts of the country, and it is particularly desirable observations be made immediately after a discharge of electricity.

THE INVISIBLE COMMODORE;

OR,

THE SECRETS OF THE MILL.

CHAPTER I.

At the foot of one of the highest eastern hills of Barbadoes there stood in ancient days a windmill, attached to a house, in the midst of one of those dense forests by which the island was originally distinguished.

These buildings had been built of wood. They were in a rickety and dilapidated condition, and were reputed haunted.

Their former owner having been murdered by a couple of slaves to whom he had been cruel, no one had been known since that event to pass or tarry in their vicinity after night-fall.

No one—until within a few years of the date of our narrative.

A single rude bridle-path traversed the island from southwest to northeast, passing near the lone mill and dwelling, and leading by a steep and difficult descent to the eastern shore—"Below the Cliff," as it is now called—but the scene immediately around the ruined structures still retained all its primeval wildness.

Near the close of a lovely day in September, a man, riding a coal-black horse, could have been seen approaching these solitudes from the direction of Bridgetown.

He was a man of five-and-thirty years of age, tall and sinewy, with strength and agility of no common order.

His features were as inscrutable as the face of a sphinx. He wore his visage as one might wear a mask.

He was handsome and graceful—just as a tiger is handsome and graceful. The deep bronze of a tropical sun had lain so long upon his face and hands as to have become habitual. His garb was a rich undress uniform, characterised by a sword and a pair of pistols.

"It has been three years to-day since I landed here," he muttered. "This long masquerade begins to tell upon me. Its dangers and difficulties, too, are constantly increasing. Strange that my identity has so long escaped detection!"

His "identity?" His "long masquerade?"

Evidently, he was sailing under false colours. The silence deepened around him as he continued to advance. At that day the eastern shore of Barbadoes could not have been called occupied.

Even at present its occupants are comparatively few in number. Suddenly the horseman met one of the few settlers of the district, who saluted him respectfully, doffing his hat and coming to a halt.

"I am glad to see you again, Major Clyde," said this man. "These visits of the Deputy Governor of the island give us great pleasure."

The horseman drew rein as he bowed his acknowledgments.

"The governor himself was out here this morning, Mr. Deputy," added the planter, "and I had quite a talk with him."

"Yes? About the crops, I suppose?"

"No, Mr. Deputy; about Captain Mallet."

The Deputy started visibly.

The name of Captain Mallet was a name of terror. He was the most dreaded pirate ever

known in the West Indies—the most successful, the most cruel and bloody, the most mysterious. No one professed to have seen him for years. "The Invisible Commodore" was one of his popular titles.

He was supposed to be always operating under a disguise. Few days passed that did not bring afflicting tidings of him.

Many were the ships he had plundered and destroyed, with their crews and passengers, and beyond all computation was the aggregate of his booty.

All the leading pirates of his time acted by his directions. It was in vain that a price had been set upon his head, and that fleets had been fitted out to capture him; he was still at large, although in concealment, and as active as ever.

"Well, what about Captain Mallet?" asked the Deputy, in his most insinuating tone.

"Why, it seems the governor is greatly fretted at the non-success of his efforts for the capture of Mallet," pursued the planter, garrulously; "and says the pirate must have a spy on this very island. If not, how does Mallet know so well when and how to strike his terrible blows? Not a ship can leave the island without risk of capture. The same may be said of every ship coming from Europe. In a word, the 'invisible commodore' seems just as well posted about our affairs, Mr. Deputy, as you are yourself."

"Indeed?" returned the Deputy, scanning the planter's face narrowly. "How came the governor to talk with you on the subject?"

"Oh, he was asking me if I had noticed any mysterious persons prowling about who might be spies of the pirate's."

"Well, did you come to any conclusion?"

"Certainly not. How could we, Mr. Deputy? It's all mystery how the pirate goes on in such a way. I think Satan helps him."

"I daresay he does, sir!"

And with a careless little nod of adieu, the Deputy resumed his progress.

He was known as "Major Clyde," it seems. He was also figuring as "Deputy Governor of the island."

"The governor has been here, eh?" he ejaculated, dropping into a deep study. "Can it be that I am an object of suspicion to him, as of aversion to his daughter?"

Reaching the lone mill, the Deputy drew rein and dismounted, throwing his bridle over a post.

Saluting a dwarfish old negro woman in charge of the premises, and who slipped from a hammock, under the trees, at his approach, he led the way into the dwelling.

The house was poorly and scantily furnished, as if solely for the use and benefit of the old negress.

A cat of inky blackness and a couple of curious looking hounds occupied the hearth.

It was generally thought that the Deputy was "odd" and "queer" to have become the owner of the haunted mill; but no suspicion attached to the act, or to his frequent rides in that direction, as his avowed purpose was to give the old creature a home that was pleasing to her, and it was accounted as kind as natural that he should visit her often.

"Everything is all right here, mammy, I suppose?" he asked.

"Yes, master."

"No spies about? No visits of any kind?"

"No, sir."

"You must be wide awake, mammy," enjoined the Deputy. "We may have to get out of this in a hurry. I've had one or two close calls lately. You must be quick to report to me anything suspicious!"

Ascending a staircase, the Deputy gained the second floor, which consisted of a single room, containing the bed and other effects of an old negress.

Still ascending, he reached a small, square apartment at the top of the house.

From this point the range of his vision was immense. Only three peaks of the island were higher.

Taking a powerful marine glass from its rack against the wall, the Deputy began to scan eagerly the surface of the waters.

"There's a single sail in sight," he muttered, at the end of a long scrutiny. "She must be the 'Alliance.' I daresay we shall have news to-night."

Descending to the verandah, he addressed a few words to the old negress and took his departure.

Evidently he and this woman had secrets of their own, and were pursuing their own objects.

He was barely clear of the premises when he was startled by the sudden appearance of a man in the garb of a sailor from the adjacent bushes.

"Is the old mill hereabouts, Major Clyde's place, sir?" asked the stranger, saluting in sailor-fashion.

The Deputy nodded.

"Is the major here, sir? I'd like to see him."

"Well," returned the Deputy, carelessly, "what can I do for you?"

"This was as much as to say;

"I am the major."

But the new-comer didn't see the matter in that light.

"Will you please to say to the major, sir," he asked, looking the Deputy fully and squarely in the face, "that an old friend wishes to see him?"

The request looked grave to the hearer. He dismounted and fastened his horse, while he scrutinised the seaman intently.

"An old friend?" he repeated.

"Yes, sir—an old friend, Tom Skerit," explained the sailor. "You see, sir, I was for eight years Major Clyde's 'boy,' before I ever went to sea—and bad luck to the day when I left him! Since then I have been in all sorts of places; but hearing that my old master is now Deputy Governor of Barbadoes, I have come here to ask him to take me back into his service."

Pardon me, sir, for troubling a total stranger, as you are, sir, but if you will kindly say to the major that Tom Skerit is here you will greatly oblige me, sir."

"So Major Clyde is your old master, is he?" asked the Deputy, with a dazed and startled look he could not entirely conceal. "But how does it happen, my man, if you are looking for Major Clyde, that you do not inquire at the Government House at Bridgetown?"

"I'll tell you how that is, sir," said the sailor, briskly. "I worked my passage in a little turtler from Antigua. We got becalmed this morning and had other bad luck, so that the skipper concluded to run into Conset Bay instead of trying to weather the Cobbler Rocks and to go around the island. Learning from an old fisherman under the cliff that Major Clyde has a place hereabouts, and being assured that I might find him here at about this hour, I concluded to take the ruined mill in my way across the island."

"Where is the turtler now?" asked the Deputy, whose cheeks were glowing like fire.

"In Conset Bay, sir."

"Who knows of your presence and business here?"

"Only the skipper and the old fisherman."

"You are all right, I see," said the Deputy, forcing a smile. "If you will come with me I will take you to your old master."

The sailor expressed his thanks, following the Deputy into the adjacent bushes. At the end of a few minutes the latter halted near the edge of a gigantic precipice, with a sheer fall of a hundred feet.

"I hear the major now," he said. "He's under the cliff with some men, cutting timber for a stable he proposes to build. I'll show you where he is—there, between the two largest trees."

The seaman looked intently.

"There—a little more under the cliff," added the Deputy, listening, and sending a comprehensive glance in every direction around him, while he stepped nearer to the edge of the precipice.

"Don't you see him?"

The sailor also advanced a couple of steps nearer, craning his neck over the abyss.

"I see nothing," he answered.

A quick, vigorous push from behind with both hands by the Deputy sent the unfortunate man into the dreadful depths below.

A single wild yell of horror—a long crash of branches and of rattling stones, followed by a dull and yet thundering shock—and all was still around the assassin.

"That's the third man who has met that fate," he muttered, hoarsely. "So much for his being wiser than he ought to be!"

Turning quietly away, he retraced his steps to the bridle-path, mounted his horse, and rode swiftly away in the direction from which he had come.

Clearly, whoever this man was, he was not Major Clyde, since the sailor did not know him.

For several minutes, as the Deputy continued to ride forward, the solitude remained profound around him.

No person became visible—no house. But gradually the bridle-path became more open, as did the surrounding country, and anon he came to a plantation, where several blacks were visible.

Other houses succeeded at marked intervals. The scene continued to improve as he neared Bridgetown.

In less than an hour after leaving the ruined mill he drew up at the Government House which stood then, as now, upon a handsome elevation overlooking the town, relinquished his horse to a groom, and directed his steps toward the entrance, after another of his snaky and comprehensive glances around him.

By this time the night had fully set in, starry and clear, with refreshing breezes.

There were several persons visible upon the broad front veranda of the official residence. A crude band of four or five pieces was essaying a popular air.

Several groups of ladies and gentlemen were visible in the adjoining grounds, some of them promenading in the starlight.

The governor himself was sauntering in one of the walks of the esplanade, with his arms crossed upon his back, and it was easy to see that he was uneasy and excited.

In those days the Governor of Barbadoes was a personage of no little importance, having a wide jurisdiction and a corresponding weight of duty.

He was not only expected to push the interests of England in the New World, but to look sharply after the proceedings of France and Spain in that quarter.

It had accordingly been the policy and practice of the British Government to place in this difficult post a first-class soldier and administrator—a man of proven courage and ability, and one whose career and experience especially fitted him for the office.

The post was now occupied by an old warrior and statesman—Governor Morrow—who had commanded several expeditionary forces to various quarters of the world; a man who had grown grey in the field, and who was as scarred and grizzled, but who still remained as knightly and noble and generous as if none of the stern passions of warfare had ever entered his breast.

"Is it you, Major Clyde?" asked the governor, pausing in his walk.

"Yes, your excellency."

It will be remarked that the governor himself was deceived in regard to the real character and identity of his assistant.

"The ship 'Usher' has arrived, via Antigua, during your absence," pursued Governor Morrow, "and she brings quite a mail, in which I am roundly abused for not clearing the West Indies of pirates. There are also several letters for you, Major, which I have placed on your desk."

Expressing his acknowledgments, the Deputy crossed the veranda and entered the large reception-room in which he and his superior habitually transacted business.

The apartment was rather soberly lighted,

there being no person within at that hour, but an additional candle or two sufficed for the Deputy's letters, the first of which was as follows:

"BROTHER, brother, why do you not write to us? It has now been more than three years—the whole period of your absence, in fact—since we received a letter from you in your own handwriting! What is the meaning of this strange and horrible silence? Have you not received our many, many letters? Are we not still dear to you? Have you no longer any interest in us or affection for us? In heaven's name, what is the matter? Father and mother both join me in these reproaches. Are we never to hear directly from you again? You seem to have forgotten us all from the day when you sailed to take possession of your post as Deputy Governor of that wretched island! But do not think that we shall always put up with this treatment. If we do not have a good long letter from you soon—such a letter as you used to write almost daily during former absences—we shall all take ship and come out there to deal with you in person! Write! write!—Your sister, BLANCHE."

It was singular what colours came and went upon the Deputy's face as he read this burning epistle.

"Whew! this is pressing," he muttered, inaudibly. "The too warm affection of this anxious darling threatens to make me trouble! But here's a postscript. Let's see what it is!"

The postscript contained only these words:

"Mother has had terrible dreams about you. She dreamed three nights in succession that you are in a cage in the hands of the pirates, and that the man who has taken your place, as Deputy Governor, is an impostor and a pirate—as horrible a villain as ever existed! You see how nervous she is!"

The face of the Deputy became livid. His look of consternation was startling.

"This is extraordinary," he muttered, "There is something in dreams that no man has fathomed! I, too, have had them! I dreamed only last night—things too terrible to recall," he added, hastily, loosening his cravat. "But this letter! How—"

He was interrupted by the sound of light footsteps and the rustling of garments, and looked up to encounter the gaze of the governor's daughter.

The wife of Governor Morrow had died several years before his arrival in the colony, but she still lived in a second edition in the person of her only child—one of the rarest and sweetest beings that ever existed.

Everybody agreed that the light of the Government House, as of the governor's heart—and even of the whole colony—was the presence of the charming Miss Morrow, who was just entering her twentieth year.

She being what she was, it was no wonder that the strange and sinister Deputy was madly in love with her.

And he being what he was (as little as his real character was suspected), it was equally natural that she had rejected him just as often as his burning passion had driven him to an avowal of his sentiments.

"Ah! it's you, Miss Morrow?" exclaimed the Deputy, starting to his feet, with a profound inclination, and with a mien so changed from his savage aspect in the hills that an observer would have hardly believed him to be the same person. "I have not had the pleasure of seeing you to-day."

"I bring you a letter I have received from your sister, Major Clyde," said Miss Morrow, briefly. "She writes me that you have not written her a line, in your own handwriting, since you left her, and she begs me to find out the reason and tell her. Her letter has distressed me greatly."

And as the Deputy received the letter in question from her hand, she added:

"I agree with your sister, Major Clyde, that your conduct is very strange!"

The last two words were pronounced with an

emphasis that gave the Deputy an electric shock.

The depth of his emotion betrayed itself in the sudden blanching of his cheeks. He glanced over the letter with a visible apprehension that did not escape the keen scrutiny of Miss Morrow.

"It's the usual reproach," was his comment on the epistle. "And really it is all deserved. I have been so busy of late with the duties of my office. Besides, several letters that I wrote appear to have miscarried. They were doubtless destroyed, with the ships that carried them, by the pirates. I must write by the very next vessel."

"I will say as much to your sister, Major Clyde," observed Miss Morrow; "for, of course, common politeness requires me to answer the letter."

And with this she withdrew.

Left to himself, the strange Deputy corrugated his brows in a study full of perplexities.

"I don't know how I shall get out of this scrape," he mused; "but writing is, of course, out of the question. I shall have to invent further excuses if I am to continue in place here—be ill again, or seriously wounded, and again get the governor or Miss Morrow or the chaplain of the garrison to write for me. If these little games don't work I will write to this loving sister to come here."

The smile that bared his teeth at this resolve was such an expression as a wolf might display at sight of its victim.

At that instant a hideous black dwarf appeared silently at the rear entrance.

"Master," whispered this personage, "there's trouble!"

Nodding understandingly to his slave, the Deputy hastened to join him in the garden at the rear of the residence, the black having retreated in that direction as swiftly and noiselessly as he had come.

(To be Continued.)

HOW TO LEND MONEY

To your friends! As a pure business transaction, you may not be too careful. But when a friend of other years comes along, who has not been as successful as yourself, whom disappointment or misplaced confidence, or unavoidable calamity has pressed to the earth, a friend who was once your equal in all things, inferior in none, except perhaps in that hardness of character, which is a general element of success in life, don't begin to hem and haw, and stroke your chin; don't talk about "buts" and "whys," and the "tightness of the money market;" he knows that already—spare him the intelligence that you "once loaned Mr. so and so a sum of money, which was never returned." He don't want your biography, he wants your cash.

Don't remind him that if he were to die, you would lose it; that arrow may sink deeper into his heart than any amount of money could ever fathom, and then, close with a recital of this, that and the other thing, which, if really true, could not materially interfere with your furnishing him the required amount. If you have ordinary sagacity, you can make up your mind in a moment, whether to grant the accommodation or to refuse it.

If you are a man and you design a refusal, tell him at once in some kindly way, that you do not feel prepared to accede to his wishes. If on the other hand, you have a heart to help him, don't do it as if you felt it were a mountain grinding you to powder, or as if each shilling you parted from was inflicting pain equal to the drawing of a tooth; don't torture him with cross-questioning, nor worm out of him some of the most sacred secrets of his life; away with your inquisitorial, brassy impertinence.

Don't lay him on the rack for an hour at a time, as if you gloated at the sacrifice of his manhood, as if you wished to make him go down on his very knees to win his way into your purse.

Away with it all we say, and stand up like a man; give him a cordial greeting, let sunshine light up your countenance, and speak out before he has done asking, tell him how much you are gratified at having it in your power to help him, and let that help go out in a full, free soul, and with a good slap on the shoulder, bid him look upward and ahead, for there's sunshine there for him.

Why the very feeling in that man's heart as he goes away from you is worth more to humanity than all the money you let him have, ten times told. He goes out of your presence with a heart as light as a feather, in love with the world, and full of admiring gratitude towards you.

He feels his manhood, he feels that confidence is reposed in him, that he is still a man, and this conviction nerves him up to a resolution, to an ambition, to an energy which are of themselves a guarantee of after success. He goes to work with a will, which hews down the obstacles and melts away the icebergs which hedge up the ways of men, and behold! in a moment rough places are made smooth, and straight places made plain to him.

Reader, suppose you never get your money back, and you have a heart so big that you can, notwithstanding his non-payment, give him at every meeting a cordial smile of friendly recognition, can speak to him without ever reminding him of his indebtedness; it may be that you are his only friend, but then you are the world to him, and however hardly that world may have dealt with him, your single exception is placed to the credit side of humanity, a thousand times its individual value; that man can never die a misanthrope, for he will insist upon it to his latest breath, "There's kindness in the world after all."

What a grand thing it is to have a man close his eyes in death, and one of the last thoughts of mortality be a prayer for blessings on your head.

SUMMER TRAVELLING.

It is an almost universal practice for persons who travel, especially when children are along, to take a variety of cakes and sweetmeats. We earnestly warn our readers against the practice—it is in every way pernicious. Sweetmeats tempt the appetite, induce thirst, which when gratified produces a sensation of fullness and discomfort and crossness. It takes away the appetite of grown persons, clogs the stomach, and deranges the whole system.

There is nothing better for children and grown persons, than some crackers or bread, without being liable to the objections of sweetmeats. But for grown persons it is far best not to eat anything at all while travelling, except at regular meals. But if you are not sure of at least a full half hour, for actual sitting at the table, do not go to it. Take a sandwich, and travel on.

WATERING POT PLANTS.

In the operation of watering potted plants persons not practically familiar with plant culture are apt to make serious mistakes. It may be said that writers are always harping on this theme, but it is one to which attention cannot be too frequently drawn. Our mind reverts to the subject because only a few days ago we saw a lamentable case, where some valuable plants had been completely destroyed through injudicious watering.

Cultivators find by experience that an excess of water at the roots is very injurious to almost all plants, and hence it is usual to direct that great caution be used in the application of water, especially in the winter. The result is, that frequently the opposite extreme is fallen into, to the great injury of the plants. From the moment that the soil becomes so far dried that the fibres of the root cannot absorb mois-

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ture from it the plant begins to suffer. Some plants can bear this loss of water with more impunity than others; some again, and the Erica family among the rest, are in this way soon destroyed.

The object in watering should be to prevent this stage of dryness being reached, at least during the plant is growing, and at all times in the case of those of very rigid structure; at the same time excess, which would sodden the soil and gorge the plant is also avoided.

Within these limits the most inexperienced persons may follow sound directions for the application of water with safety; but whenever water is given to pot plants, enough should be employed to wet the soil thoroughly, and the difference between plants that require more or less water should be made by watering more or less frequently, and not by giving greater or lesser quantities at one time.

THE PROGRESS OF BOTANY.

A BELGIAN journal of horticulture has, according to the "Lancet," given some curious figures showing the rapid increase in our knowledge of the vegetable kingdom. In the Bible about 100 plants are alluded to; Hippocrates mentioned 234; Theophrastus 500, and Pliny 800. From this time there was little addition to our knowledge until the Renaissance.

In the beginning of the fifteenth century Gesner could only enumerate 800, but at its close Bauhin described 6,000. Tournefort in 1694 recognised 10,146 species; but Linnaeus, in the next century, working more cautiously, defined only 7,294.

In the beginning of this century, in 1805, Persoon described 25,000 species, comprising, however, numerous minute fungi. In 1819 De Candolle estimated the known species at 30,000. Loudon in 1839 gave 31,731 species, and in 1846 Professor Lindley enumerated 66,435 dicotyledons and 13,952 monocotyledons, in all 80,387; but in 1853 these had increased to 92,920, and in 1863 Bentley estimated the known species at 125,000.

CODE OF HONOUR.

A MAN cannot afford to be ungrateful under any circumstances; a man cannot afford to be mean at any time; a man cannot afford to do less than his best at all times, and under all circumstances. No matter how unjustly you are treated, you cannot, for your own sake, afford to use anything but your better service. You cannot afford to lie to a liar; you cannot afford to do other than uprightly with any man, no matter what exigencies may exist between him and you.

No man can afford to be any but a true man, living in his higher nature and acting with his highest consideration.

THE ROMANCE OF LITERARY DISCOVERY.

To the merest accidents have we been indebted for the preservation of volumes which are justly considered to rank among the most precious relics of literature; and not less remarkable than the discoveries themselves, is the fact that they have often been made at a time when further delay would have made them impossible. This has been particularly noticeable in regard to the remains of classical literature.

In a dungeon at the monastery of St. Gall, Poggio found, corroded with damp and covered with filth, the great work of Quintilian. In Westphalia a monk stumbled accidentally on the only manuscript of Tacitus, and to that accident we owe the writings of an historian who

has had more influence, perhaps, on modern prose literature than any ancient writer, with the solitary exception of Cicero. The poems of Propertius, one of the most vigorous and original of the Roman poets, were found under the casks in a wine-cellar. In a few months the manuscript would have crumbled to pieces and become completely illegible.

Parts of Homer have come to light in the most extraordinary way. A considerable portion of the "Iliad," for instance, was found in the hand of a mummy. The best of the Greek romances, the "Ethiopics," of Heliodorus, which was such a favourite with Mrs. Browning, was rescued by a common soldier, who found it kicking about the streets of a town in Hungary. To turn, however, to more modern times. Everybody knows how Sir Robert Cotton rescued the original manuscript of Magna Charta from the hands of a common tailor, who was cutting it up for measures.

The valuable Thurloe State papers were brought to light by the tumbling in of the ceiling of some chambers in Lincoln's Inn. The charming letters of Lady Mary Montague, which have long taken their place among English classics, were found in the false bottom of an old trunk; and in the secret drawer of a chest the curious manuscripts of Dr. Dee lurked unsuspected for years. One of the most singular discoveries of this kind was the recovery of that delightful volume, Luther's "Table Talk." A gentleman in 1626 had occasion to build upon the old foundation of a house. When the workmen were engaged in digging they found, "lying in a deep, obscure hole, wrapped in strong linen cloth which was waxed all over with beeswax within and without," this interesting work, which had lain concealed ever since its suppression by Pope Gregory XIII.

We are told that one of the cantos of Dante's "Paradiso," which had long been mislaid, was drawn from its lurking-place (it had slipped beneath a window-sill) in consequence of an intimation received in a dream. One of the most interesting of Milton's prose works—the essay on the Doctrines of Christianity—was unearthed from the midst of a bundle of despatches, by a Mr. Lemon, deputy keeper of the State papers, in 1823. How the manuscript could have found its way into such uncongenial company remains a mystery to the present day.

As years roll on, and curiosity is more and more awakened, such discoveries must become rarer; but probably many precious documents are still lurking in unsuspected corners, and not a few literary discoveries remain even now to be made, which will, when made, immortalise the discoverer.

BE KIND TO CHILDREN.

THEN your name will be held by them, in after years, with a grateful remembrance—for impressions formed in childhood, though trifling in their nature, are almost always indelible.

If we speak an unkind word to a child; how soon a shade of gloom will steal over its little brow; and if they have really done something that deserves censure, remember they are but children, and you must expect they will do things inconsiderately; but it is your duty to forgive, and treat them with kindness, for we are satisfied, from what has come under our own observation, that kindness will control an obstinate child far better than severity. If that be true, be kind to children.

But perhaps a mother will say, "My child is so obstinate that I cannot help speaking to it harshly." But remember, mother, your harsh words have lost their power, and if you would control your child, let your voice be low and soft, as the Æolian harp.

MEERKNES and courtesy will always recommend the first address, but soon fail and nauseate unless they are associated with more sprightly qualities.

MISTLETOE IN THE GARDEN.

WHEN looking through a Yorkshire vicarage garden a few days ago, we were much struck with the appearance of an apple-tree bearing nearly a dozen tufts of mistletoe. The seeds had been sown from time to time by the vicar of the parish, and all had grown, and soon he will be able to supply mistletoe enough for the whole of the parish. The method of sowing is a very simple one, and it appears to be quite devoid of the mystery that is sometimes attempted to be hedged round the subject by writers. His method of sowing is very simple. Just about now a berry of the mistletoe is taken, which it is well known is in the form of a corn, with some white viscid matter surrounding it. This is rubbed on the bark of a young, vigorous shoot, just beneath a bud, to hide it from the eyes of birds, and here it soon sends forth roots and grows into a plant.

One almost wonders that nurserymen have not attempted to obtain standard mistletoe in this way; though, probably, the time required to bring the trees to anything like maturity would greatly augment their cost.

FRYING AND FRYING PANS.

EVERY well-appointed kitchen should have the means of frying in two different ways; the first, that commonly employed, is done in an ordinary frying-pan, of which it is needless to give a description. A little fat is put into the pan; when it is hot the article to be cooked is laid in it, and when done one side is turned to the other. It is, in fact, broiling by means of contact with hot iron, the slight quantity of grease just serving to prevent burning.

Some things, which can stand rough handling, as chops and steaks, may be cooked in this way to a palatable condition; but the more delicate kinds of fish, bread-crumbed cutlets, &c., are mostly failures. For these there should be a deep frying-pan or dish, allowing the things to be plunged in the boiling-fat. Its dimensions should be sufficient to cook a fish the size of a handsome mackerel. The deep pan by no means dispenses with the smaller and shallower frying-pan for doing small things, such as kidneys, eggs, and steaks wanted in a hurry. Its depth may be from six to eight inches, as no more fat need be put in than will fairly cover the article to be fried, and which may be laid on the wire-bottomed strainer for plunging in the fat and taking out. The handles, both of the pan and the strainer, should be tipped with wood.

A small wire basket, also with a wooden-tipped handle, will be found useful for frying small tender things, as whitebait, smelts, gudgeons, parsley, and vegetables divided into small portions. In a common shallow frying-pan, small tender objects are apt to break and become sodden with grease. By plunging them in boiling fat, their outside is set, and forms a crust; their substance becomes firm, and when taken out they are crisp and dry. This is how suburban Parisian restaurants make such relishing fries out of river fish such as dace, roach, bleak, and gudgeon.

It is necessary to have the fat hot enough, because boiling grease does not penetrate the solid articles of food that are plunged in it, but shuts itself out at once by forming a brown case all over their surface. The natural juices inside do the rest, swelling the thing fried by their partial conversion into steam. If the fat is not hot enough it may be known by letting one drop of water fall upon it; if it splutters and dances, all is right.

A better way is to try it with a strip or thin slice of crumb of bread. If it speedily turns of a golden brown, you may begin frying at once, remembering that things do very quickly, and cannot be left a minute. Even a three or four pound fish will speedily be done enough, and have acquired the tinge which brings the water into your mouth.



[THE LOST MANTILLA.]

THE BLACK LACE MANTILLA.

I DREW the mantilla and its accompanying whiff of spicy odours from the large flat box we all knew so well, heaving at the same time a dolorous sigh.

"It is really very tender, girls," I said. "It has seen its best days."

We all regarded with reverential eyes: Philippa from her most imposing height, as she stood upright by the mantel; and Meg from her corner of the hearth-rug, only I regret to say that Meg glowered from under her square-cut fringe of black hair, which was a bad habit of hers, when she was dissatisfied.

"It has been mended so often," I proceeded, "that, upon inspection, the darns begin to show."

"They are wounds received in many battles," said Philippa; and added, softly: "It was always so becoming."

"It is like an old mountebank," cried Meg. "We may say of it, as of the clown, 'The Black Lace Mantilla will appear again.'"

"When you have worn it, a few score of times, Meg," said Philippa, "as a scarf, as a shawl, as a veil, as an over-dress, you will not be so ungrateful. For my part, I must confess that the ancestress, who brought it into the family, a century ago, is the only one I care a penny for."

"Pooh!" retorted Meg, with all the audacity of fifteen years. "Who knows anything of the

Pointdexters a century ago? That is only a tale of Larry's. I don't believe we ever had any ancestors at all."

It was not a very gay, or luxurious life, that we Pointdexters led; and it had its little shifts and economies; but even Meg, whose wilful youth led her into protest now and then, had never said that it was an unpleasant one, or that it had not its fascinations.

There were four of us—Philippa, Meg, myself, and our brother, Laurence, who was our head and protector. We were poor, and rather proud people, at least we were rather proud of our old name, and of the ancestry in which it was Meg's whim to affect to disbelieve, but of which she was in secret prouder than the rest.

Each of us was the possessor of the smallest of incomes, and these little incomes, added to the proceeds of Larry's pictures, supported us, and allowed us to indulge in our favourite Bohemian style of living, first in one place, and then in another.

The greater portion of our lives had been spent in continental cities. We had eaten figs, chestnuts, and black bread, and drunk thin wine in Florence, Milan, and Rome, and when luck favoured us, had been guilty of the extravagance of snug dinners, at our favourite restaurant in Paris. Meg adored Florence; Philippa preferred Paris; my fancy was for Geneva; Larry's for Rome.

But at this particular era, in the existence of the Black Lace Mantilla, we were in Florence; the family funds were low; and Philippa, having an invitation to an evening party, we

had turned, in dearth of better position, to our heirloom, and to a certain white silk which had been one of Larry's extravagant freaks, in days gone by.

"The white silk of course," said Meg, "and the jet and pearl ornaments; the mitigated affliction costume, you know; and it's the most becoming of the lot. What a blessing it is that great aunt Meredith died, when she did, so that you can wear it. I wonder if she did it on purpose."

"Meg," I remarked, with my sternest air, "don't be flippant."

But the fear of man was not before Meg's eyes.

"I'm not flippant," she retorted. "She never did anything so accommodating before, and she did not leave us anything. As to the black lace mantilla, I believe you could furnish a house with it, if the idea occurred to you. You never find it too large, or too small, for anything."

I may as well announce, at once, that Philippa was our beauty. I have seen people start as she passed them in the street, and even stop short that they might turn to look at her.

Her height and wonderful carriage having marked her at once as an object of attention, her picturesque face invariably accomplished the rest.

To Larry she was positive capital, always ready for advantageous investment. He took for his models her hands; her arched feet; her hair, which was of the warm brown of an autumn leaf; her rather loftily carried head; and, indeed, every charm in detail. But he had been so chary of attacking the same charm, as a whole, that I really think it was something of a shock to us, when he at last proposed doing so, in the following manner.

He had been talking for some time, in an undecided fashion, of choosing a subject for the picture he intended to exhibit in Paris, in May; and this very evening he startled us all, by suddenly uttering a low exclamation of satisfaction.

Philippa had been standing, musing, by the window, in the dusk, idly looking down at the narrow, fast-darkening street; and I remember well the fine clearness of the profile her turn of the head revealed.

"What did you say, Larry?" she asked.

"I do not know what I said," he answered, "but whatever it was, it meant that I have found what I want."

"I am glad of that," said Meg. "I wish I could find what I want."

"I have found," proceeded Larry, without noticing her, "the subject for my picture. Hand me the Black Lace Mantilla."

We all laughed at this, for only a day or so before, Meg had suggested that he should perpetuate, upon canvas, nothing less than our cherished mantilla. "And call it," she added, "The Forlorn Hope."

But Laurence remained unmoved by our laughter. His new idea impressed him too favourably.

"I am going to do as Meg advised," he said. "I am going to paint the old mantilla. But I shall put Philippa under it, standing, as she stands just now, at a window in the dusk. A Spanish girl waiting to hear the sound of her lover's feet below. And I shall call it 'Felipa.'"

For a moment or so Philippa was silent. In fact, she was a young person of most lofty spirit, and capable, when she chose, of wearing very proud little airs indeed, considering her humble social position.

"I do not know," she said, slowly, and with little spaces between her words, "I am not sure that I should like it—the being hung up, in the Palais de l'Industrie, and stared at by everybody."

"Pooh!" said Meg. "As if that mattered. As if they would not stare at you, whether you were hung up or not; I should think you were used to it, by this time."

Philippa threw up her fine chin, and turned to the window again.

It was always her habit to treat Meg's young

audacities rather cavalierly. The patrician calm, which was her private weakness, would not permit itself to be disturbed.

"Though, if you really care about it, Larry," she condescended, "of course I shall not refuse to make myself as useful as possible."

"Care about it?" cried Larry, with enthusiasm. "It is the happiest thought I have had in my life. It roused me the instant it crossed my mind. Produce the mantilla at once."

As it was lying on the table at that moment, it was easily produced; and I myself went and threw it experimentally over Philippa's head, while Meg looked on, with secret approval. By April the picture was finished, and in May it was entered at the usual exhibition of modern paintings, at the Palais de l'Industrie; while we had established ourselves, for the spring, in a modest fourth floor, in the rue Balzac.

Each of us was, in secret, sure that the picture would prove a success; though divers ill-natured freaks of fortune, in the past, had made us chary of speaking our minds. But we were scarcely prepared to find it the triumph it was.

On the very first day of its exhibition, a cantankerous old critic suddenly brought himself to a full stop before 'Felipa,' stared at her, brought his glass to bear upon her, glanced at his catalogue, and complained of her name as 'Indefinite,' and finally, in the hearing of an anxious little crowd, waiting for his verdict, granted a few terse sentences of actual approval.

This was the beginning. The next day a fashionable beauty, who knew nothing whatever, brought her train, and was seized upon by a whim to admire, upon which the train admired also, and were loud in their plaudits. Then came careful people, who had no time to lose, and came because a rumour of the critic's commendation had reached them.

Then an idle dilettante, or so, who wanted something fresh.

Then the crowd, who follow where they are led; and presto! 'Felipa,' at her window, was the fashion, a picture to be stared at, and talked of, and mentioned in columns of art gossip.

So, at length, even Philippa herself awakened from her calm indifference, and deigned to acknowledge a slight feeling of interest.

"If you are at liberty, Janet," she said to me, one morning, at breakfast, "I think I should like to go to the Palais de l'Industrie. We will go early, and I will wear a thick veil."

"Certainly, my dear," I answered.

Accordingly, under cover of the veil, and the quietest of dresses, she went with me; and of course our curiosity led us first to wind our way through the crowd, until we came to the group, which, at this time, always gathered about 'Felipa.'

Later in the day, the group would have been a larger one, but at this early hour, it was composed chiefly of the few fastidious, who had enthusiasm enough to desire to indulge in their admirations and criticisms in some degree of seclusion—in fact it was a group at once select and critical.

Philippa and I seated ourselves, in the background, and looked on, though I must so far exonerate Philippa from the charge of vanity, as to confess that it was I who wished to remain and hear the comments, and not she.

We had barely seated ourselves, before there was an addition to the group. There approached two men—one young and carelessly attired, and with an air of the studio about him; an American, I felt convinced; the other past his first youth, perfectly dressed, and evidently a Frenchman.

And, than this Frenchman, it has been my fortune to see few more striking looking men. His very maturity ranged itself upon his side, as an advantage; his face was of a fine, clear pallor; his features aquiline; the hair slightly thinned upon his forehead; his movements admirable, ease itself.

As they drew near, he spoke to his companion, in excellent English, though with a strong French accent.

"I repeat," he said, as if rapidly continuing some previous conversation, "I repeat that it is a creature of flesh and blood. The expression is not of sufficient intangibility to be purely of the imagination. I detected a reality at once. The position also is less affected than it would be, if it had been only the fancy of the artist. It is nature! He has had a model, who comprehended this thought. Look and see if you do not agree with me."

The younger man laughed, as he regarded the picture with some curiosity.

"By Jove!" he said, "it's a better thing than I expected. The fact is, I have not been interested enough to care much about seeing it before. I have been fearfully hard worked; and he doesn't profess to be a great gun, you know, this Poindexter. This is the first time he has created a sensation, though his fancies are always graceful, and he is a fastidious worker. He is a nice fellow too, and well liked. They say he has half a dozen sisters, whom he keeps pretty closely, because he is too poor and proud to introduce them to the world."

But his companion was looking at the 'Felipa,' and scarcely seemed to hear.

"I have seen too many women, and too many pictures," he said, with a slight upraising of his shoulders, "not to be able to discriminate between the two."

"Only," objected the American, lightly, "one does not often see a woman so charmingly picturesque as the 'Felipa.'"

There was the faintest possible acquisition of polite coldness in his friend's reply, as if he was inconsistent enough to secretly resent his good-humoured carelessness of speech.

Philippa rose with her most leisurely composure. "Suppose we go on," she suggested. "I am tired of sitting down."

"But my dear," I said, "we have hardly been seated five minutes."

"Nevertheless, I am tired," she answered, and I was obliged to follow her.

That night Larry came home, in the best of spirits. The 'Felipa' had found a purchaser, and at an excellent price; such a price as was new in our experience, and caused general rejoicings.

"M. Saint-Meran," read Larry, producing a card. "A wonderful fellow, by the way. The kind of individual who allowed himself to be guillotined, with profound indifference, in the palm days of the Place la Concorde; and yet a man who has friends in the Quartier Latin today, who adore him—poor artists and students of whom the Faubourgs St. Germain and St. Honoré know nothing. In fact, an aristocrat republican, with unlimited capital to spend on his unlimited whims. They say his collections of pictures and curiosities are beyond price."

I glanced involuntarily at Philippa, who, meeting my eye, expressed my thought for me, with a quiet readiness I had scarcely expected.

"I have an idea that we saw him, this morning," she said, "Janet and I, looking at the 'Felipa,' with a rather shabby young artist."

It was not at all improbable, Larry thought, since it was just his style to be fraternising, in a stately fashion, with some less lucky Bohemian; and he forthwith proceeded to relate a series of anecdotes, which interested us not a little, all bearing on M. Saint-Meran, and his patrician peculiarities.

But notwithstanding our interest, of course we did not think it very likely we should see him again, as we did about a fortnight later, and under the following odd circumstances. I had been repairing, with infinite pains and labour, an unfortunate rent made in the mantilla, during the days of its service. The day was dying, and Philippa was standing at the window, watching the passers-by, when I approached her, with my work in my hand.

"I must say," I remarked, "that I rather pride myself upon the way in which it is done. For my part, I don't believe it will ever be seen at all; particularly if it is worn discreetly."

"That is the advantage of that kind of pattern," she answered. "One who is quick at her needle can take a stitch here and a stitch there, without their showing themselves."

"And then," I added, throwing it over her head, "one can conceal so much in the folds. Oh, no! it will never be seen at all."

It still covered her hair, and we were still discussing it, when she surprised me by suddenly taking a quick step into the shadow of the curtain.

"What did you see?" I asked.

"It is someone in the street," she replied. "Someone who looked up."

Naturally I glanced downward, and it chanced that I was just in time to see the person move slowly away, in rather a perturbed manner.

As he passed a street lamp, that had just been lighted, I caught sight of his profile.

"Philippa!" I exclaimed, "it is M. Saint-Meran, I am convinced—that is, if it was he we saw with the artist."

"Yes," was her response, made in a slightly annoyed tone, "I felt sure I recognised him. How absurd that I should have chanced to be standing here, with the mantilla over my head!"

When Larry came to dinner, he brought with him news of a great treat in store for us—one of the treats which unfrequently fell to our lot.

"Girls," he said, "who wants to go to the opera, to-morrow night? I met Despard, in a lavish mood, this morning. The journals have been saying something about him: and behold the result," flourishing certain delightful talismanic scrip.

Meg, who lay upon the sofa, wrapped in shawls, indulged in an angry little sniff.

"I believe that Despard chooses his time," she said. "He always gives you tickets, when I can't go. The last time I had nothing to wear, and now I have the influenza. One can't appear at the opera, even in an upper tier, with a nose like a danger signal."

But Philippa and I were more fortunate. I was well enough provided for, in my bestative; while Philippa had a grand gown of black silk, which Larry had presented to her, as her share in the profits of the 'Felipa.'

Attired in this, she fairly outdid herself; and when, at the last moment, I threw the old lace, scarf-like, over her shoulders she became quite wonderful.

It is scarcely necessary to say we enjoyed our little dissipation.

We always did enjoy such little dissimations, when they fell to our lot; and this evening we were all in very good spirits indeed.

Philippa, sitting in the front row, drew so many eyes and glasses to our side of the house, that I secretly wondered how she could comport herself with such supreme calm; for looking at her, one really would have imagined that she knew nothing of the attention she attracted, and that even if she had been conscious of it, she would have remained equally unmoved. But this was her cool, grand style always.

The event of the evening, however, occurred when we reached home.

Larry paid the driver of our fiacre, and sent him away, and we went upstairs, laughing and talking.

But as I was unlocking our passage door, Philippa raised her hand to her shoulder, and uttered an alarmed ejaculation.

"Oh, Janet! Janet!" she cried out. "The mantilla."

"The mantilla?" I quite gasped, almost dropping my key. "What has happened to the mantilla?"

"It is gone," she answered. "I have not got it on. I must have dropped it."

"Larry!" I said. "Run downstairs. Fly! Perhaps she dropped it as she got out of the fiacre; and someone may pass, and pick it up. Oh, Philippa! Just to think of its being possible for us to lose the mantilla!"

Larry ran downstairs, and we stood upon the landing, and bent over the balustrades, in a breathless condition. If the mantilla was gone, we had certainly met with the most dire of calamities.

Philippa actually turned pale, and for my

part I think I uttered a succession of heart-wrung little groans.

But it was all to no avail.

In course of time Larry returned with a grave face.

"It isn't there," he said; "and there is no one in sight. I even went to the end of the street. And I have examined every foot of the staircase."

Despair reigned supreme. We went into the salon, and sat down, and gazed at each other blankly.

I thought of the "Luck of Edenball," and felt as if something terrible would happen.

To have lost, positively lost, the black lace mantilla.

We were generally dejected all the next day; and Meg, whose disgust was aggravated by influenza, was the most aggrieved member of our party.

But on the third day occurred a circumstance, which, figuratively speaking, set us upon our feet again.

In the course of the morning we heard a carriage stop in the street below; and shortly afterwards we were aroused from our melancholy by a ring at our door, after which came Bertha with a card.

Larry read it, and left his easel, in evident amazement.

"M. Saint-Meran!" he said. "What brings M. Saint-Meran?"

He went to the room the visitor waited in, and our astonishment may be imagined when in ten minutes he returned, bringing M. Saint-Meran with him, grave, pale, distinguished, and as perfectly at ease as ever, notwithstanding the fact that Larry flourished triumphantly the black lace mantilla.

I confess to having felt some confusion, but Philippa, rising in her quiet, not-to-be-moved fashion, was a match for M. Saint-Meran himself.

"Behold!" cried Larry. "The black lace mantilla has appeared again. It was M. Saint-Meran who found it; and I have brought him to receive your thanks, Philippa."

Saint-Meran bowed slightly.

"I had the pleasure of seeing Mademoiselle wear the lace at the opera," he explained; "and as I was on the point of stepping into my carriage, upon leaving the house, I caught sight of it, as it lay upon the pavement—possibly just as it had fallen from Mademoiselle's shoulders. I am happy to be the means of restoring it to her."

I do not remember, in the least, what Philippa's reply was.

I only recollect her enviable self-possession, under our visitor's glance. Well-bred as he was, it was quite plain, to me at least, that he was observing her, in an indescribable way, even when he was not looking at her at all.

He remained to look at Larry's pictures, and to talk, until his call had prolonged itself to half an hour's length; and when he went we all understood, somehow or other, that we should see him again.

"I wonder why he didn't send it by a servant?" said Molly, who rather resented being caught at a disadvantage, in an unbecoming shawl.

"Well," answered Larry, "he said something about desiring to bring it himself, because he wished to see me—and he could not bring it before, because he had an engagement, which took him out of Paris until last night. You know he is a fellow of whims."

Our conviction that he would come again proved a correct one. He did come again, several times; and the extraordinary end of the matter was, that, in less than six weeks, he, one evening, demanded of us—Larry and myself, as the heads of the family—a private interview.

On granting it to him, we found it remarkable for a certain grave and ceremonious stateliness, which to the average English mind was a little trying, notwithstanding its delicacy. And most singular to relate, the sole subject of the conversation, carried on between us was—Philippa.

It was absolutely astonishing. He was really in love with her, and laid aside his reserve to tell us so, with a candour which quite appealed to my sentimental, old-maid heart.

"It was my fate, that I should see the 'Felipa,'" he said, "and my fate that it should move me as it did. I will confess that I continually sought an opportunity to discover your sister, and that my personal restoration of the lace had my desire to meet her for its chief motive."

"But—but," cried Larry, a little wildly, "you have not spoken to Philippa?"

"Certainly not, monsieur," with fine dignity, "without first having obtained your permission."

But for a lingering sense of the proprieties, I think Larry would have clutched at his hair in his embarrassment.

"Oh!" he exclaimed. "You have that, and, if it is all the same to you, I would rather refer you to Philippa at once. You see we English are not used to this kind of thing; and it really seems slightly alarming. One is never sure what a girl means, you know. And after all it is Philippa who is to be Madame Saint-Meran."

Saint-Meran bowed, smiling slightly.

"If I am so fortunate," he said, "as also to gain her permission."

Upon the whole, I am of the opinion that this stately manner of wooing pleased Philippa better than any other would have done. She received M. Saint-Meran as if she had been born a Frenchwoman.

In my eyes she had never appeared to so great an advantage as when he presented himself to her. Calm as she was outwardly, I saw a little heart-stirred colour on her cheek; and I am sure, indeed, that it would have been impossible for a woman to remain untouched by the delicate flavour of romance and chivalrousness in the story M. Saint-Meran told her briefly as it expressed itself.

"Mr. Poindexter has already sanctioned my suit," he ended. And you, my dear mademoiselle?"

Philippa extended her hand to him, with the most charming grace and composure.

"I," she replied, "shall be happy to receive M. Saint-Meran at all times."

And then he took the hand she had extended, and bending, touched it lightly with his lips.

In one of M. Saint-Meran's private apartments hangs the "Felipa." It is not on view among the rest of his collection. He is too proud a man to permit even his own circle to discuss the story connected with his marriage. At the same time, however, I will add, that the union has proved so fortunate a one, that I am convinced that neither Madame Saint-Meran, nor himself, could be induced under any circumstances to part with this once popular picture.

F. H. B.

FACETIÆ.

OUTDONE BY A BOY.

A LAD in Boston, rather small for his years, works in an office as errand boy for four gentlemen who do business there. One day the gentlemen were chaffing him a little about being so small, and said to him:

"You never will amount to much—you never can do much business; you are too small."

The little fellow looked at them.

"Well," said he, "as small as I am, I can do something which none of you four men can do."

"Ah, what is that?" said they.

"I don't know as I ought to tell you," he replied.

But they were anxious to know, and urged him to tell what he could do that none of them were able to do.

"I can keep from swearing," said the little fellow.

There were some blushes on four manly faces, and there seemed to be very little anxiety for further information on the point.

CRUEL!

JONES and BROWN were the oldest, the dearest, and the very best of friends.

Jones came of an enthusiastic stock; BROWN possessed rooted ideas of another sort.

Jones suddenly fell in love—out of his depth.

The enthusiasm of Jones then was awful, especially to BROWN, who had to listen to it by the yard, and hour.

"What can I do?" perorated the enthusiastic one. "What, oh what! My Julia is beautiful—angelic—divine! Cupid, they say, is blind. True, I am blind, I know it; but, under the circumstances, what, oh! what, can I do?"

BROWN sugared his third tumbler with sweet care, and got a good light to his fourth regalia, then he spoke.

"Well, Jones," said BROWN, "if, as you say, you are blind, I say, marry Miss Julia, that will be sure to open your eyes."

CUI DONO?

ANOTHER new planet has been discovered; but Sir Stafford Northcote naturally asks, "What is the good of it?" You can't tax minor planets and if you could, this one has come to light—no light has come to it—too late for the Budget.

—Funny Folks.

"COME, BIRDIE, COME."

"ONE swallow cannot make a summer," but according to a well-known advertisement, one Raven can make a Spring. —Funny Folks.

A FRESH FIELD.

"MAJOR CHAMPAIN has been appointed Telegraph Director-General for India." Just the man—at all events for field telegraphs.

—Funny Folks.

NATURAL SUGGESTION.

A GENTLEMAN suffering from gout was explaining to a friend that his doctor did not permit him to eat sweets, potatoes, fruits, farinaceous vegetables, ale, beer, wine. "Well," exclaimed the friend, "why don't you get another doctor?"

—Funny Folks.

WATER, they say, finds its own level. Does gin-and-water find its own spirit-level?

NOT THEIRS.

"Do you see any grapes, Bob?"

"Yes."

"Any dogs?"

"Yes."

"Big dogs, Bob?"

"Yes, very big."

"Then come along. Those grapes are not ours."

A RACE-COURSE.

AN old gentleman, walking near a race-course, stopped and tapped an interested spectator on the shoulder.

"Why this concourse of people, my friend?" he asked.

"It is not a concourse, sir; it is a race-course," replied the spectator.

THE MAN.

A YOUNGSTER made a drawing of a waggon piled with boxes.

He showed his work to his mother, who asked him what it represented.

"It is a man selling apples," replied young hopeful.

"But where is the man?"

"Gone to a house up the hill to see if they want any apples."

VERDICT OF THE LOWER TEN.

THIS ain't a poor man's Budget—Who says 'tis, tells a cracker. Only twopence a pound on money, And fourpence a pound on 'bacca!

—Punch.

ADDITIONS TO THE ZOO.

A ROUGH-SCALED CORDYALE—made cordyale-y welcome, of course.

A Merian Opossum—a real genuine "merry un."

Two Black Cynnets—not to be confounded with the seals.

A Common Adder—reckoned of sum interest.

Two Wood Owls—regular board-ers.

An Oil Bird—one of the 'air-oil sort.

A Brazilian Tree-Porcupine—is being rapidly ac-climb-matised.

Two Blue-Bearded Jays—Blue-beards in charge of their own jay-ler.

A Military Macaw—one of the "general" sort.

A Bergora Hawk—Begara! this must be Irish.

An Adjutant Bird—"attached" to the commissariat department. —Funny Folks.

A BATCH OF WHYS.

Why are ambassadors the most perfect people in the world?—Because they are all excellencies.

Why is sympathy like blind-man's-buff.—It is a fellow feeling for a fellow-creature.

Why is the sun like a good loaf?—Because it's light when it rises.

Why is a sawyer like a lawyer?—Because whichever way he goes down comes the dust?

Why are washerwomen silly people?—Because they put out their tubs to catch soft water when it rains hard.

Why is a man who doesn't lose his temper like a schoolmaster?—Because he keeps cool (keeps school).

Why are mountains like invalids?—Because they look peakish.

Why are umbrellas like pancakes?—Because they are seldom seen after Lent.

Why is a drunkard hesitating to sign the pledge like a sceptical Hindoo?—Because he doubts whether to give up the worship of jug or not.

Why cannot two slender persons ever become great friends?—Because they will always be slight acquaintances.

A WRONG-FONT OYSTER.

A CERTAIN well-known printer, whom we will designate as Footstick, is seated in an oyster house perusing a bill of fare.

FOOTSTICK: "I say (hic), waiter."

WAITER (approaching quickly): "Yes, sir."

FOOTSTICK: "Gimme some oysters—stewed oysters—(hic) and don't be all night about it."

Waiter departs.

In preparing the stew a few stones by accident got mixed with the oysters, and without waiting to remove them the waiter, thinking Footstick too drunk to observe the mistake, returns and deposits the dish before him.

A few mouthfuls are consumed, when the man of types cautiously begins feeling about the soup with his spoon, and presently brings forth a stone.

FOOTSTICK (wildly): "Waiter!"

WAITER (returning): "Yes, sir."

FOOTSTICK: "What did I order?"

WAITER: "Oyster stew, sir."

FOOTSTICK: "That's so. Jest look at that," holding up a stone. "My friend, here's a wrong font oyster, or (hic) the proof lies."

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE.

WHEN a common school-teacher in Virginia found upon his examination papers the question—

"How does a ship at sea find its latitude and longitude?"—he rose to the occasion, and promptly wrote:

"It finds its longitude hot and its latitude cold."

STATISTICS.

OUR FOREIGN DEBTORS.—In the Income Tax return, Schedule C, comprising dividends and annuities payable out of any public revenue, attracts little notice generally, and details are only given occasionally. It will be of interest to observe that in the financial year 1876-7 dividends or annuities amounting to £2,260,872 on Russian stock were charged to Income Tax in this country under that schedule, and dividends

amounting to £1,739,468 on Egyptian stocks. Turkey, unfortunately, does not supply a very large amount of dividends for our taxation, the sum only reaching £386,604 in the year. Japan is in the list for dividends amounting to £212,833 charged with Income Tax, but China for only the modest sum of £44,698. The totals are as follows:—Dividends on foreign stocks, £3,316,463; on Indian, £7,068,327; on colonial, £3,755,106.

THE GOLDEN WEDDING DAY.

UNDER the homestead roof they stand
Where the peace e'er broodeth like a dove,

There years ago with hand in hand
They took the sacred pledge of love;
Bright days, time's flock of happy birds,
Have flown in joyousness away,
And life has lisped in pleasant words:
Its blessings sweet from day to day.

They've crossed the bridge that stretches wide

From infancy to ripe old age,
And read the lessons ne'er denied
To those who open wisdom's page;
They've garnered much, they've suffered loss,
They've shared in fortune's smile and frown,

Together they've borne many a cross,
Together they now wear love's crown.

Swift as the rivers to the sea
Their never ceasing courses run,
Their years have flowed on silently
And life at last is almost done;
Full half a century, since their vow
Of love was made, has passed away,
Life's closing hour is near, and now
It is their golden wedding day.

Around them gather daughters, sons,
Grand-children, too, a happy throng,
The faithful and the loving ones,
The kind, brave hearts, the true and strong;
From distant homes, with love's design,
These hearts their pilgrimage have made,
And on affection's hallowed shrine
Their choicest offerings have laid.

They bring no gems from India's mines,
Nor woven fabrics rich and rare,
Nor paintings old, nor sparkling wines,
Nor sculptor's work beyond compare;
But, with the noblest thought imbued
Which filial duty e'er imparts,
They bring the gifts of gratitude—
The coinage of devoted hearts.

So meets the rosy morn of life
With life's refining evening shade;
So middle age foregoes its strife
Till love has its full homage paid.
The air of voices sweet is stirred
And song and merriment beguile;
No sounds save those of joy are heard,
No look is given but wears a smile.

"Heaven bless and keep you, children all!"
Thus speak the happy aged twain;
"May no ill fortune you befall,
Nor loss of friendship cause you pain.
Heaven bless you and protection give
Through all your varying lives for aye,
And may you all, dear children, live
To greet your golden wedding day."

C. D.

GEMS.

Who that possessed integrity did not derive untold advantages from it? It is better than riches, it is of more value than "diamonds and

all precious stones;" and yet every man may possess it. The poorest may have it, and no power on earth can wrest it from them. Young men, prize integrity of character above all other earthly gifts.

BEGIN the education of the heart, not with the cultivation of noble propensities, but with the cutting away of those that are evil. When once the noxious herbs are withered and rooted out, then the more noble plants, strong in themselves, will shoot upwards. The virtues, like the body, become strong and healthy more by labour than nourishment.

THINK not of faults committed in the past when one has reformed his conduct.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

SWEET SAUCE.—Mix a tablespoonful of flour quite smooth in four tablespoonfuls of water, then stir into it half a pint of boiling water, sugar to taste; stir over the fire until it boils, add an ounce of butter with a tablespoonful of lemon juice, or half a grated nutmeg.

CHARLOTTE RUSSE.—Take one-fifth of a package of gelatine and half a cupful of cold milk; place in a farina-boiler, and stir gently over the fire until the gelatine is dissolved; pour into a dish, and place in a cool room; take one pint of rich cream and whisk it with a tin egg-beater until it is thick; flavour the cream with either vanilla or wine, and sweeten to taste; when the gelatine is cool, strain carefully until it is filled; cover with lady fingers, and ice the top, if you desire to.

FISH AND MACARONI.—Take the remains of any kind of white boiled fish, remove the bones and skin, and break it in rather small pieces. Boil some macaroni in water till tender, drain it well, and cut it in lengths of about an inch, and mix equal quantities of fish and macaroni. Then put two ounces butter into a stew-pan, add the yolks of two eggs, a little lemon-juice, pepper, and salt, and stir in well half a pint of good melted butter; make the sauce quite smooth, put in the fish and macaroni, and heat it thoroughly in the sauce. Pour it out on a dish, keeping it as high as you can in the centre, cover it thinly with fine bread-crumbs, and brown the top in the oven till of a nice light colour.

LOBSTER BAKED IN ITS SHELL.—Boil the lobster. After removing the meat, put it in a saucepan with quarter pint of cream, or rich milk, pepper, salt, and a dessert spoon of butter rolled in flour; stir it to keep from oiling; when all ingredients are well mixed, pour them into the shell, and bake in the oven until of a light brown colour, then serve hot. Fresh cod-fish and halibut are both excellent cooked in this manner.

MISCELLANEOUS.

IN order to investigate the contents of the Exhibition, the visitor will have to walk twenty miles.

THE Louvre has purchased, for the sum of 28,000 francs, the magnificent torso of a Venus lately discovered at Vienna, in Dauphiné.

LEO XIII. has abandoned the white robe worn by his predecessor, and walks about clad in complete scarlet. Nor is the difference between him and his predecessor confined to raiment, but extends to the inner man; for though more reserved than the genial old Pontiff who has just gone down to the grave, he never launches forth into any bursts of anger.

It was a mistake not to manufacture the Exhibition tickets like those for railway purposes; as it is, they are in bank-note paper, crumpling easily, and requiring a separate division of your pocket-book. They are, artistically speaking, neither very pretty nor positively ugly; the allegorical work has a crowded look. The tickets are sold like postage stamps, in sheets of thirty-six, or three stamps for twelve rows, with perforated separations.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

VIOLET M. V.—If we had time and space to spare, and any useful purpose could be served, we would gladly enter into full details of the many and varied symptoms which indicate or usually accompany the disease that affects you, but they would avail you little—and perhaps be harmful—without the aid of a competent medical man, who of course would be thoroughly acquainted with the subject.

J. B. L.—Sarsaparilla is the root of the Smilax, and the most esteemed is called Jamaica. The name is derived from two Spanish words—*sarsa*, a bramble, and *parilla*, a vine. Decoction of sarsaparilla is made by taking, say, four ounces of the root, sliced down, and putting it into four pints of water and simmering for four hours; after which it is taken out, mashed, replaced in the liquor, which is boiled to two pints, strained and cooled. A wineglassful three times a day is the usual dose. 2. The formula prescribed for clear-starching is: Rinse in three waters, dry, dip into thick-made starch strained through muslin; squeeze, shake gently, and again hang to dry; then dip into clear water two or three times, squeeze, spread on linen cloth, roll up in it, to lie an hour before ironing. The addition of a little bees-wax or borax to the starch is desirable. The end of a paraffin candle is also recommended to increase glossiness.

EDITH G.—Our requirements are, at present, amply met.

GRANDMOTHER.—We do not know of any such institution.

E. P.—Porcelain (from the Portuguese *porcellana*, a cup or vessel) is a superior kind of earthenware, also called china on account of its having been first introduced into Europe from the Celestial Empire. A description of the processes involved in the combination of the constituent earths into clay, turning the product while plastic into required shape by the lathe, burning, glazing, painting, and burnishing, would occupy too much space for insertion here. Any good cyclopaedia or dictionary of arts or technology should contain particulars on the subject, and there are now two journals in existence devoted to the pottery interest.

ALEX. T.—1. Scraped horseradish and warm milk are said to be effective in removing sunburn. If the skin is sensitive and readily tanned by exposure the following remedy may be made use of: Take two drachms of borax, one drachm of Roman alum, one drachm of camphor, half an ounce of sugar candy, and a pound of ox-gall. Mix and stir for about ten minutes three or four times a day for a fortnight till clear and transparent. Strain through blotting-paper and bottle for use. 2. Washing with mild, emollient soap and warm water will promote whiteness of the hands. Glycerine is good to use for the same purpose. Gloves should be worn in the open air.

GERDA P.—1. In cold water. 2. Cold bathing would do good and the use of Goulard water would be also beneficial. Colour of hair greyish brown.

AN INVENTOR.—Taking out a patent is rather an expensive business. On payment of £25 for stamp duties one can get protection for fourteen years, provided that after three years a further sum of £50 be paid, and after seven years another sum of £100; and to maintain an action for infringement the article patented must be shown to be novel, useful, and capable of being turned to account in commerce. The law upon these matters is so complicated that it would be the best way for you to appoint a patent agent to manage the arrangements for you for a reasonable fee.

H. M. A.—We cannot tell where the 88th Regiment may be when this paragraph meets your eye. Consult the Army List, which appears monthly, the Army Stations in a military paper, or Jackson's Woolwich Gazette.

A. W.—1. Freckles may sometimes be removed by strawberry juice or by sour milk with common soda, or by a mixture of rose leaves, dried, quarter of an ounce, and lemon juice and run or brandy, of each one pint. Many other remedies are recommended, for some of which see answer to "Harry," No. 738, and to "Flo," No. 749. 2. Perspiration is essential to health in that it regulates the temperature of the body and promotes the excretion of the noxious matter—hence, generally it should be promoted and not checked, for when suppressed it is a frequent cause of diarrhoea, fevers, and colds. Nevertheless, it would do you no harm to avoid as far as possible hot liquids and other forms of food which you find have a diaphoretic tendency.

G. C.—No charge is made.

N. MacD.—Story unsuitable.

HAPPY HARRY, a mechanic, would like to correspond with a dark, good-looking young lady with a view to matrimony. He is twenty-three, dark.

A. T., a writer in the Royal Navy, nineteen, light hair, blue eyes, fair, medium height, would like to correspond with a young lady about seventeen.

EDITH and MAT, two friends, wish to correspond with two young gentlemen. Edith is eighteen, brown hair, grey eyes. May is sixteen, medium height, dark brown hair, hazel eyes.

HOWARD H., medium height, dark, blue eyes, would like to correspond with a lady. Must be thoroughly domesticated.

CLARA H., nineteen, brown hair and eyes, fond of home, would like to correspond with a sailor in the Royal Navy, tall, fond of children.

CYRIL, tall, good-looking, would like to correspond with a young lady, dark.

CHEERY, seventeen, dark, brown eyes, would like to correspond with a fair gentleman.

JENNIE and WINNY, two friends, would like to correspond with two young men. Jennie is eighteen, medium height, brown hair, grey eyes. Winny is tall, brown hair, hazel eyes.

JESS and BELL, two friends, wish to correspond with two young gentlemen. Jess is eighteen, tall, good-looking, dark hair and eyes, fond of music, of a loving disposition. Bell is eighteen, tall, fair, dark blue eyes, fond of music. Respondents must be about twenty, medium height, dark.

ETHEL T., twenty-eight, fond of home, would like to correspond with a tall gentleman with a view to matrimony.

JENNIE, twenty, golden hair, blue eyes, would like to correspond with a gentleman about thirty, dark, fond of home and children.

THE DIVIDING LINE.

Two homes are in sight of each other

In a green little vale that I know,

One a mansion as fair as a palace—

One a cottage in groves nestled low;

The woman in one ever singeth,

Though her good man be often away,

In the other the lady is silent,

Though her lord at her side ever stay.

And the woman down there in the cottage

Never mansionward looks with a sigh,

While she of the mansion oft looketh

Cottageward with a tear in her eye;

But oft when her lord at siesta,

Or at stroll through his acres, is seen,

This lady will steal to the paling

That standeth the gardens between.

She never would cross the brief limit—

She is proud, and her station is pat—

While the sister beyond it is humble,

And vulgar, and poor, and all that;

But my lady, down there at the paling,

Just bends her proud ear to its line,

And listen, in lip-parted silence,

As though for a choir of the Nine.

With eye, lip, and ear attent strangely,

She lists with her heart and her soul,

As though for the sweetness of music

That ever from Paradise stole,

There it is! How her breast heaves with rap-

ture!

How she drinks in the sound as it comes!

A melody of sweet childish voices,

And a din of toy trumpets and drums.

A silence—a quarrel made merry—

Then a baby's fat crow over all—

Then a sweet little Babel of pleasure

Over mudpies, or "ketcher," or ball;

Ah, she hangs, heart-enthralled, on that music,

Till the sound of her lord at the gate,

Or his yawn from his broken siesta,

Calls her back, proud and sad, to her state.

The fates that draw lines of division

So harsh 'twixt the high and the low,

Never fail to compensate the weaker

By some means. And the cause you now know

Why the woman down there in the cottage

Never mansionward looks with a sigh,

While she of the mansion oft looketh

Cottageward with a tear in her eye.

N. D. U.

NELL, LIZZIE, LOUISA, and VIOLET, four friends, would like to correspond with four young men. Nell is twenty, fair, blue eyes, fond of home and music. Lizzie is nineteen, tall, light curly hair, brown eyes, of a loving disposition, fond of home. Louisa is seventeen, medium height, fair, fond of dancing. Violet is twenty, loving, tall, dark brown eyes.

HETTIE and GERTY, two friends, would like to correspond with two young men with a view to matrimony. Hettie is twenty, fair, dark hair and eyes, medium height, of a loving disposition, thoroughly domesticated. Gerty is twenty-three, black hair and eyes, fond of home and children. Respondents must be of loving dispositions, fond of home.

D. D., J. G., H. C., S. G., and M. W., five seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with five young ladies. D. D. is twenty, dark hair and eyes, of a loving disposition. J. G. is twenty-one, dark hair and eyes, fond of home and music. H. C. is twenty-four, auburn hair; grey eyes, fond of home and dancing. S. G. is twenty-three, light hair, blue eyes, fond of home. M. W. is twenty-three, brown hair, dark eyes, fond of home and children.

WILLIAM and HARRY, two friends, would like to correspond with two young ladies. William is twenty-four, medium height, brown hair, hazel eyes, fond of home and children. Harry is twenty-one, blue eyes, loving, fond of music.

NONCHALENTS, of a loving disposition, dark, would like to correspond with a fair young lady with a view to matrimony.

D. C. and S. L., two friends, would like to correspond with two young ladies. D. C. is good-looking, dark. S. L. is tall, fair.

CARLE, seventeen, medium height, golden hair, dark blue eyes, would like to correspond with a young gentleman.

BESS and FLOSS, two friends, would like to correspond with two gentlemen. Bess is nineteen, tall, light hair, dark blue eyes. Floss is eighteen, medium height, dark hair and eyes, fond of dancing.

ALICE L. and BERTHA A., two friends, would like to correspond with two gentlemen. Alice is twenty-one, dark hair, light blue eyes. Bertha is nineteen, light hair, blue eyes, tall.

SAMMY H., eighteen, dark hair, grey eyes, tall, wishes to correspond with a gentleman about twenty-two, fond of home and music.

C. P. and T. M., two friends, wish to correspond with two young men. C. P. is seventeen, medium height, light hair, blue eyes, of a loving disposition, fond of home and children. T. M. is eighteen, brown hair, dark eyes, medium height, fond of home and children, of a loving disposition. Respondents must be about twenty-one, fond of home.

M. L. D. and B. G., two seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with two young ladies. M. L. D. is handsome, fair, tall. R. G. is good-looking, fair. Must be about twenty, medium height.

V. C., twenty, tall, good-looking, dark, would like to correspond with a young lady about nineteen, dark hair and eyes.

G. C. S., twenty-two, brown hair, grey eyes, of a loving disposition, thoroughly domesticated, wishes to correspond with a young man about twenty-five, dark, and loving.

N. L., twenty-five, dark, would like to correspond with a young man about the same age with a view to matrimony.

C. S. D., nineteen, of a loving disposition, tall, dark hair, would like to correspond with a young gentleman with a view to matrimony. Respondent must be about twenty, fond of home and children, brown hair, dark eyes.

P. C. and H. L., two friends, would like to correspond with two young men about twenty-four. P. C. is twenty-two. H. L. is twenty, brown hair.

L. D., a seaman in the Royal Navy, twenty-two, dark, medium height, would like to correspond with a young lady with a view to matrimony about nineteen, fond of home.

LOO, twenty-one, brown hair, blue eyes, tall, would like to correspond with a young man about twenty-two with a view to matrimony. Respondent must be good-looking, fond of home.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

L. B. is responded to by—**M. G.**, nineteen, light auburn hair, blue eyes.

HEBO by—**Evelyn**, seventeen, blue eyes, domesticated, fond of music.

J. C. S. by—**Annie Maude**, dark hair, grey eyes, medium height.

CLARE by—**Robert**, twenty, good-looking, of a loving disposition.

JESSIE by—**Charley**, nineteen, good-looking.

S. T. by—**N. D.**, twenty-four, medium height, dark eyes, good-looking.

MASTER by—**Maud**, twenty.

NELLIE by—**F. J. T.**

LIZZIE by—**J. T. J.**, tall, fond of dancing, of medium height.

KATE by—**J. B.**, medium height.

LOTTIE by—**Syd**, twenty-three.

LIZZIE by—**Fred**, twenty two.

V. K. L. by—**Lenore**, fair, tall, fond of home and children.

W. L. by—**Alice**, medium height, hazel eyes, fond of home.

G. H. by—**Olive Maude**, twenty-one, light hair, blue eyes, fair, domesticated.

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